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# The Coastal Passage

29th Edition  
Feb. - March 08

The Heartbeat of the Boating Community!

**\*INSIDE\*** Dream Weaver *does the Kimberley and...*

*Kerry's Knickers, Oddworm's Reef, Phil's Knight, Alan's Bungle, Bob's Bare Bones and heaps more!!*

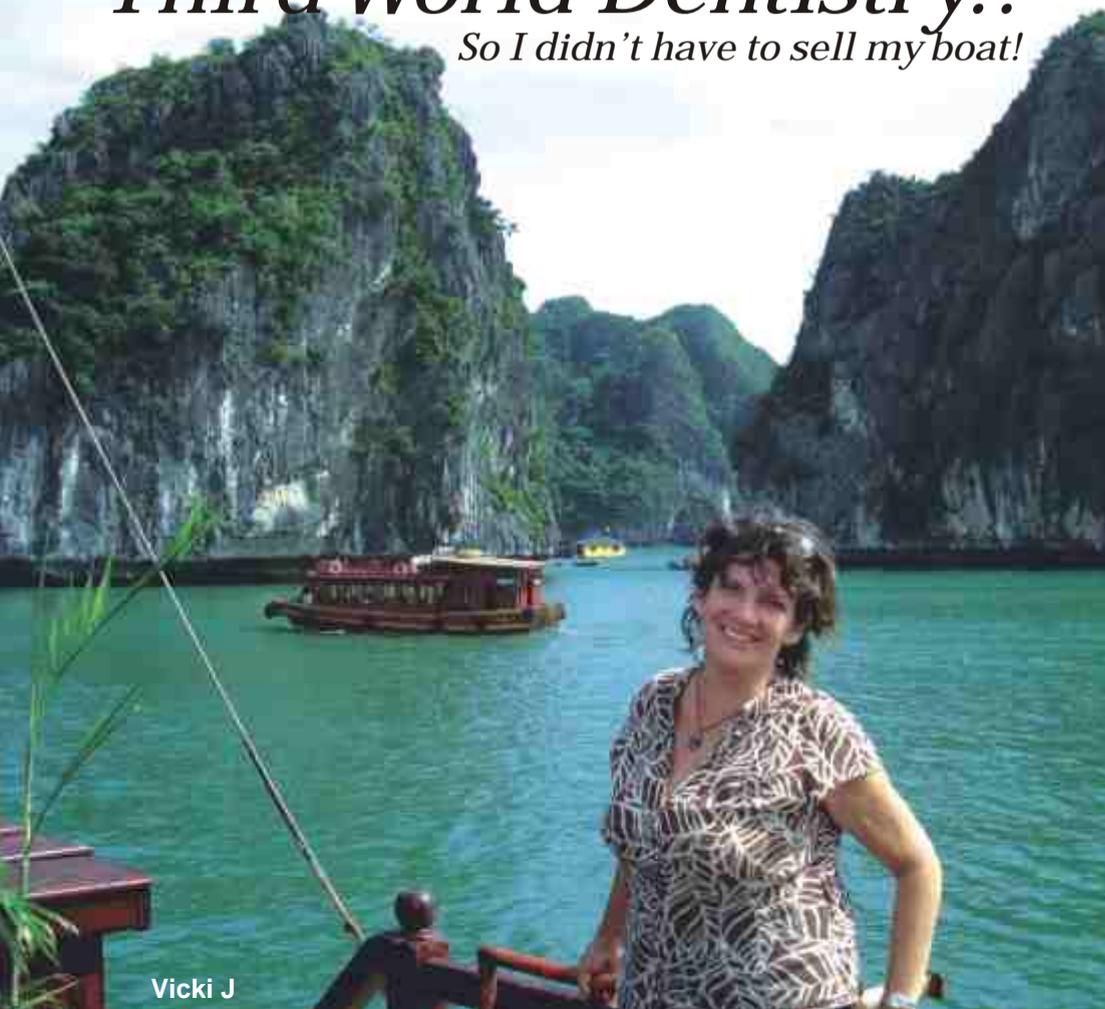


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# Reflections by Alan Lucas

## Big Boat Bungles

Alan Lucas, SY "Soleares"

When authorities get things seriously wrong, they admit nothing and then take it out on the people they are supposed to serve. I believe an example of this is Marine Safety Queensland's 2006 rule obliging owners of recreational vessels 15-metres and over to prove their worthiness before being granted the right of state registration. In the future, such owners may also have to insure against the costs of recovery and removal should their vessel be abandoned. (Bob's note; according to info forwarded to TCP by an insurer, this is the case)

Why this outrageously presumptuous law?

It's almost certainly because MSQ is running scared of its own abject failure to recognise the glaringly obvious fact over the past two or three decades that ships in the 400-ton and 50-metre range were being bought and sold as recreational craft. During that period, many elderly, out-of-survey ships, repeat *ships*, were selling for less than the price of a small motor cruiser, thereby attracting a whole new class of dreamers, most of whom could not be discouraged by their more experienced brethren who warned that a huge, rusting ship at the end of its life doesn't cost 'a few' dollars to restore, it costs millions. They were people with champagne tastes and beer incomes who refused to listen to logic.

I was familiar with a few recreational ship transactions, all of which were remarkable for the frightening naivety of the new genre of boat buyers. Let me give an example: A fully functioning, but desperately run-down 53 metre steel ship, displacing around 400 tons, sold for \$50,000. As this amount represented the buyer's total equity, he quickly learnt that a super-size boat needs super-size pockets. Her mooring fees alone were more than he earned so, destitute within weeks, he put her back on the market.

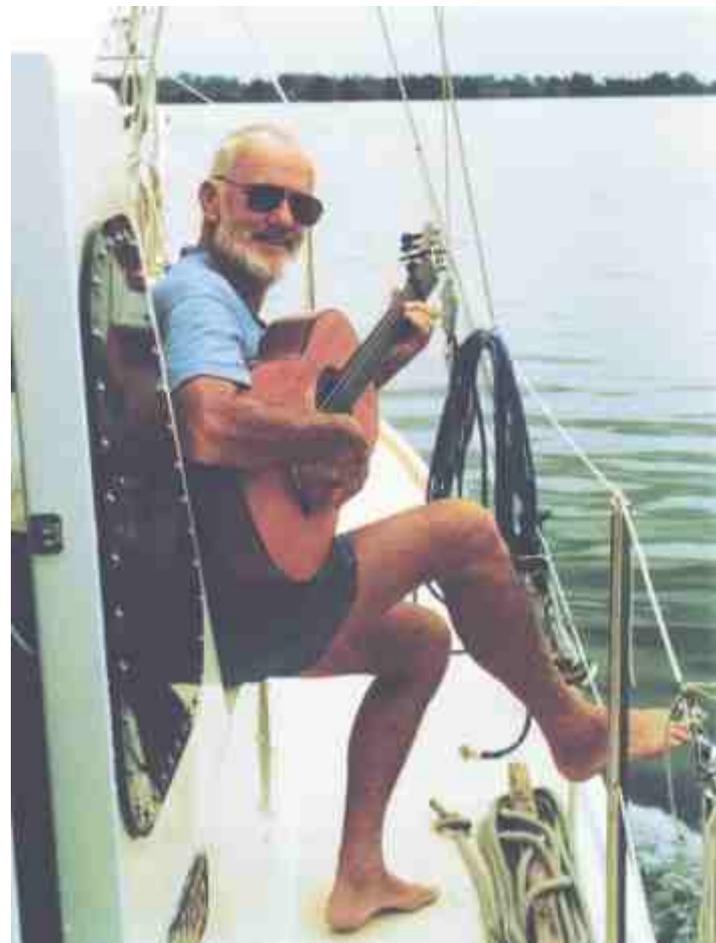
Along came another dreamer who promised, as part of the deal, to pay out his mooring debts (which, predictably, he failed to do). Having bought the vessel, one might

expect urgent investment in the ship's rust-eaten decks and bulwarks. Not this bloke. He blew it all building an onboard *helipad*! Then, having satisfied his voyeuristic, James Bond urges, he turned his attention to chipping rust in the engine room and succeeded in knocking a hole through the hull below the waterline! The fire brigade and a diver prevented his ship from sinking, after which he sold it at an enormous loss.

And then there was another 400-tonner in fair condition with twin diesel electric engines that beat her owner into financial submission after he had invested every penny into trying to turn her into a dive-cruise ship. He sold her at a massive loss to a multi-millionaire who put her in the hands of a professional yard for a full restoration. This presumably bankrupted him because she has since been in frozen animation up a well-known river for many years since.

To tell every story about big hulks and absurdly optimistic owners would fill TCP to capacity, but it can be honestly stated that the above yarns were typical, not exceptions, of the big-boat madness peculiar to the last two decades of the twentieth century. Its legacy was a flotilla of rusting, abandoned ships in various states of foundering up and down the coast, making the marine authority's anger very understandable. Sympathy, however, dies the minute an elementary question is asked: If we, the boating community, were so aware of what was going on, why wasn't the authority?

While those ships were being bought, sold and abandoned around Queensland's waterways, didn't at least one processing clerk in head office notice any anomaly in the ships' sizes? After all, 50 metres and 400 tons is not your standard recreational vessel. Were all applications blithely approved without question? Didn't at least one person higher up the authority's ladder smell a rat?



Apparently not, because now a 'customer' who dares own a vessel fifteen metres LOA or longer is obliged to obey a rule that has nothing whatsoever to do with reality. To repeat myself: *most offending vessels were around 50-metres long*, so why the figure of fifteen? To the bureaucrat responsible for this nonsense, let me explain a 2,200-year old Archimedean principle: length has little to do with a vessel's true size. Displacement is what it is all about because displacement is weight. A typical 15-metre yacht displaces around 15 to 20 tons while a typical 50-metre ship displaces around 400 to 500 tons. *Therefore you are victimising owners of vessels as small as one-twentieth the size of those responsible for this situation.* Why?

continued page 20...

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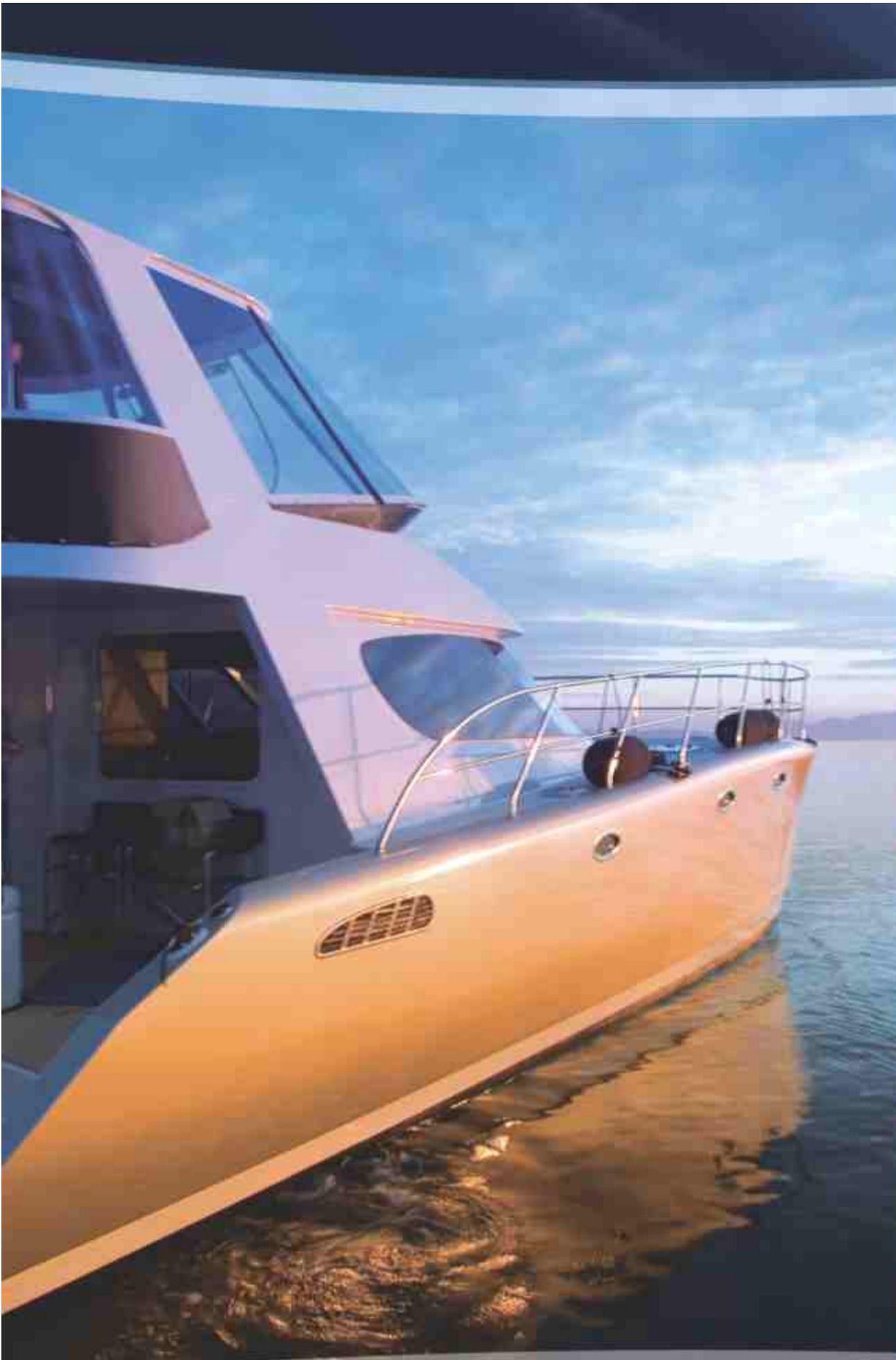
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- Brett & Donna Gray, (ex) SY Imagine
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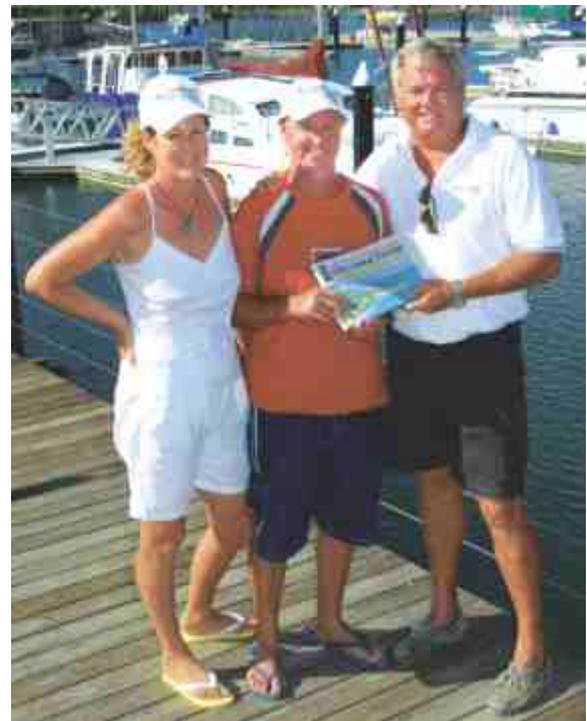
**"It can't be about you without you!"**

And as always, TCP very much appreciates your letters and other contributions that provides the rich forum of ideas that sustains the rag. For information on feature contribution requirements and awards, see the TCP web site, "contributions" page.

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# New Location!

Our good friends Wendy and Eddy of the Hitchhiker cat, "Absolutely" (left & ctr.) decided to spend the season in the far north and found a brand new bolt hole at the new **Blue Water Marina** north of Cairns. That's manager Rick Herschell about to toss out those two no doubt! Seriously it's good to see a new marina. Berths are so short up north, I'm sure it won't take long to fill er up.  
Phone: (07 0 4057 5726  
Better ask to be berthed away from *Absolutely* where it's quieter... (kidding!)

## Comment from the editor.....

**Biggest TCP ever! Because of..letters, letters and more letters...** The fleet has had a lot on the mind lately and this is YOUR RAG! There was so much built up material, TCP had to go 32 pages this edition to catch up and still much very good material waiting, patience please!

**Manzari Decision is in.** The court has found against the American couple. TCP received verbal indication of the decision Friday, 1/02/08 and is awaiting the published result that has been requested. TCP is eager to read the judges rationale.

**Good on You Chris Ennor of SY Magic Carpet!** Chris saw an injustice in progress and took it upon himself to assist a foreign yachty, research the information and supply it to TCP. See page 9. Proof once again how out of touch Australian officialdom is with the values and sense of "Fair Go" of the Australian people. Thanks for doing us proud Chris.

**Customs still just doesn't get it!** It is more than apparent that pressure has been applied to Australian Customs Service to back off the yachts. (see page 7) But the cultural background of the people staffing it prevent them from responding in spirit to the new reality created by a massive international backlash (Gee, wonder who stirred that up?!... you are welcome) and change in government. The nature of the beast is two faced. Do they think because they are smiling and accommodating (for the moment) that yachties should now trust them?! One of the first lessons I learned from my father was that a man has to own up to mistakes. Customs now exempts and forgives what were imperatives that were prosecuted last year without apology to the victims. My father would not have been impressed. Those MIB (men in blue) need to be introduced to the idea that the people they contact on vessels are not terrorists or criminals. They are their brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, fellow Australians or at least human beings. This won't be easy and some won't make the grade but those should then be discarded. This is Australia, not China, here it should be recognised that the most effective cop on the block is the one most respected, not the one most hated and feared. And finally, Customs apparently still will not engage, only speaking to press that it can count on to suck up and print their propaganda without question or investigation. When Customs can be honourable enough to admit they have been wrong in lumping yachts with ships and committing acts that appear to be entrapment, then we can start again and build the kind of relationship they SAY they want and need. But until then it's just a smiling face of Dr Jekyll hiding the ugly Mr Hyde.. waiting for their time to come round again. And before you contemplate dobbing anyone for anything to customs, keep in mind they think of themselves as above any law. They believe they are cop, judge, jury and executioner (see page 8), This is a very dangerous precedent. Customs and Quarantine are destroying vessels at sea under the thin guise of protecting the country from environmental contamination or safety when in fact it appears to be punishment for a crime they deem to have been committed. There is no recourse or appeal. And do not underestimate the importance of legal precedent because that is at the heart of the Customs controversy. See the TCP web site, "issues" page for more on this. "Anyone who can destroy a boat has murder in their heart" a quote from Heath of MV "Barbaric Joy". I don't want Indonesian's fishing in our waters either, but I want tyrants with murder in theirs hearts patrolling our shores much less. By the way.. remember the fishing ship that was chased by customs all the way from the southern ocean to south Africa a few years ago? Good thing they didn't sink that ship or Australia would have had an even bigger compensation claim when the case was thrown out of court.

**Kaz II ....** Someone was taking note of last issue of TCP. A call was received here from Frank Robson, a journalist from one of the Sydney papers, interested in pursuing the story. As he is a cruising sailor himself and as TCP would like to see more media involved in this otherwise under investigated mystery, we wish him well and hope he adds to the information. His paper has the resource, lets see. I know the waters where the disappearance of the 3 sailors occurred and there may not be a better place in Australia to arrange regular smuggling activities and I never saw a Customs vessel there. They were all about 40 miles south making pests of themselves in the anchorages of the Whitsunday's, a known hive of smuggling and terrorist activity.....

**Email...** For a period over the holidays, TCP was only responding to emails when it was essential. This was not out of rudeness but concern for recipients. It is TCP's goal to insure that TCP email is safe to receive and that the TCP web site is true to the original ethos of the world wide web, FREE and ethical. The TCP web site is one of the very few left that does not collect data on users to sell. If you are a computer web user, I strongly urge you to go to the TCP web site, "issues" page or "new stuff" and read the article "Privacy and your Computer". There have been important changes to the way business is done on the web lately and the bad guys depend on you not knowing a few simple things. I'll tell you what I've found out so far but to be brief here, **three important rules of the web..** (1) Never, ever buy anything that comes as an ad to you via email!! DON'T. (2) Never, ever forward any email that asks you to forward it. It will say it's from a legitimate source or it seems like a harmless joke or warning of a computer virus... it's all bullshit! Even those rare items that start out honest quickly get hijacked by spammers who embed their address deep into the message so that every time it gets forwarded it comes back to them and they strip out the list of new address's and sell the file to whoever will pay. That is how you get those lovely little ads for penis enlargers or phony mails claiming to be from your bank or paypal wanting you to go to their web site and then dump your pass word on their replica bank site. (3) Never, ever follow a link to a site from an email message unless you are certain, dead certain, it is to a site you know is safe, like TCP. By the way, I do know of a couple cruisers that are spamming address's and this is their warning, keep it up and find your name in print here!



## The Coastal Passage

**The voice of boaties everywhere**

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# LETTERS

**Notice to contributors:** All contributions that purport facts in a matter of possible contention, should be ready to provide support for their assertions or additional information or the contribution may be refused at the discretion of the editor. Anyone disputing a matter of fact in any part of TCP is **invited** to respond as long as the discussion remains one of fact and the responding writer must also be ready to provide support for their assertions or additional information if requested. It's about a fair go for boaties.

**Hi Bob,**

Just wanted to let you and all your readers know that I am retiring today (Nov. 23) as the manager of Kawana Waters Marina. After just on 19 years of working here at the marina it is time to say goodbye. I will miss this place and the people but we want to see the world and this big country of ours. I have met many people over the years and made many friends. Thank you to those that have made my job an enjoyable one. In our travels I always seem to call into marinas, so I may even catch up with a few of you along the way.

Fiona, who has worked with me for the past 5 years is taking over from me. I know she is looking forward to the new role and the marina will continue to be one of the friendliest marinas around.

So its bye from me.

**Regards,  
Glenda Robson, Manager, Kawana Waters Marina (formerly Lawries Marina)**

*Sincere best wishes for a brilliant retirement... and thanks for introducing TCP to the marina.*

**Bob**

## Brampton Bull...

**Dear Bob,**

I thought I would write and tell you of a recent experience that I had at Brampton Island.

Firstly however, by way of background, my Yacht "Caledonia" is a Peter Cole designed Nantucket Island 38 Ketch which I built in Taiwan in the early '80's and sailed to Australia in 1984.

Since then, "Caledonia" has been based in and around the Whitsundays, with occasional foray further North, as far as P.N.G., to the Australian territories in the Coral Sea and South as far as the Keppels.

I frequently used Brampton as a "Pit Stop", anchoring overnight, going ashore, paying my dues, enjoying a meal, drinks, and a shower and returning on board, leaving the following morning.

My crew and I were always quiet, well behaved and respected the rights of the Resort's guests; we had a harmonious relationship with the resort staff.

On a recent trip, we broke the Goldsmith to Mackay leg, by calling into Brampton (arriving mid afternoon), intending to stay overnight. We anchored out in the usual spot, well out in the bay, and clear of the jetty.

My 2 crew then went ashore, intending to register our arrival, pay the usual landing fees to the resort, and book in for dinner (and to ask about the arrival times of the ferry to Mackay, as we did not want our dinghy to impede it's docking).

Before the 2 lads could reach the office, they were intercepted by a Security Guard, who told them that they were trespassing, that the ferry to Mackay no longer operated, and that the only access to the Resort was for house guests, via light plane.

They were then told, in no uncertain terms, to leave immediately, by walking back to where the dinghy was tied up under the jetty, not along the old tram track, but along the rocks (presumably below the high water mark). They declined this offer, and the Guard saw fit not to insist (this may

have had something to do with the fact that they were both young, fit, German lads over 6ft. tall).

Half way back along the tram track, they were met by a second Security Guard, who attempted to hurry them up. I suspect this probably had the opposite effect.

I was anticipating the arrival of a boat from the Resort requesting that we leave the bay, however this did not happen, so I imagine cooler heads prevailed.

The above events occurred in late October and I thought the story may interest some of your readers.

Interestingly, The Marina office at Mackay Marina was unaware of the situation at Brampton and still had on display, brochures offering daytrips to the Island.

**Yours Sincerely,  
Graham Shields, SY "Caledonia"**

*Thanks for the heads up on Brampton. When will these buggers learn that after the culling the government has done in the last several years, the only yachties left are well off tourist! Too bad your crew has that memory of their time in OZ.*

**Bob**

**Dear Bob,**

It was quite surprising to receive the "Off Watch" form you. Bob, I really appreciate it. Alan Lucas has certainly become, over the years, a repository for nautical and historical tid bits. I never actually met him myself, but in 1962, as I was walking along the main jetty at Thursday Island, I saw a yacht, very likely the "Rendezvous" anchored just west of the jetty. From it emerged the clatter of a typewriter. Alan Lucas writing his first "Cruising the Coral Coast"? I did see him in the Gladstone marina where he arrived in the "Rene Tighe", I think it was late 1997, but he was with other people. So I just nodded as I walked past them. I also saw the "Rendezvous" sail past Samarai and up into the China Strait in 1971 or 72, but then the yacht had a new owner as I found out years later. Ships in the night, passing unseen...

I think most yachtmen, and increasingly yachtswomen also, have their own little treasure chests full of unusual and fascinating adventures. I know I have. The characters I have come across! There was an Australian surveyor (my ex-boss) who, in 1972 set sail in his yacht from Rabaul. He disappeared several times and ships were looking for him along the Papuan coast. At last he turned up in Darwin equipped with a new wife and several stepchildren.

Or the American "Don Quixote" (Alvin...) I met in Port Vila, early 1996. His *Rosinate* was a bizarre trimaran made of three big steel pipes squeezed vertically flat for the bows and horizontally for the sterns. The cabin and deck were made of corrugated roofing iron and the mast was a steel lamp post. Alvin came from California and was on his way to Tanna. His mission was to debunk the Jon Frum cargo cult there. He also analysed people's character by examining their noses. He read mine and told me I'm a cautious man.

And then there was my old friend Wally Czygan who travelled from Thursday Island to Rabaul in his 14' tinnie. He almost came to grief when he hit a log while crossing the Solomon Sea one night. Many years

ago another daredevil, "Tarzan", a feral Hungarian of noble birth, arrived by dug out canoe at Thursday Island. We wished him "Bon Voyage" as he took off for New Guinea and actually arrived there. Later he spent years roaming Cape York dressed in only a loin cloth. Eventually he was jailed for "not conforming, vagrancy and being of peculiar appearance causing consternation". But now he lives in a cave or humpy in the Mulgrave River Valley just south of Cairns as I have heard on the grape vine. I drove recently past him as he was jogging along the Bruce Highway, grey-bearded and a food-gathering sack on his bareback.

So far I have read some of Alan's "mass of fascinating material" you sent me, and, concerning shipping disasters, there appears quite commonly the same denominator: fatal familiarity and professional arrogance that have sent ships helter skelter to perdition. Yet, I had my scary moments too. My maxim had always been "careful preparation and planning, calculated risk-taking and plain common sense". Alvin, the wind-mill storming psychologist, may well have correctly diagnosed my nose after all.

**Best regards,  
Axel Hart**

*Mate. it sounds to me like you ought to write your own book. Your letters over the years have certainly been welcome and I'm grateful for every one. Now how about a close up photo of that nose!*

**Bob**

**Hi Bob,**

First off on a very positive note I would like to publicly thank Rita and her staff at Townsville Breakwater Marina for their recent help and in maintaining contact with us. It became apparent that I would require about 7 weeks of treatment at Townsville General. One option was to use the boat for accommodation. To this end I was offered a priority booking at the marina with the understanding that come what may we would be fitted in somewhere. This was a great help to my wife and myself at a very stressed period of our lives. Thank you very much.

As a final word of wisdom I would like to agree with all that has been said about stupid legislation. We live in a country with a small population and more government than you can poke a stick at. All these bureaucrats seem to be in competition with each other trying to introduce new rules. As a result we live in expensive chaos with massive duplication in any number of disciplines. Each and every state has its own rules and its own method of dipping our wallets. Whatever, these rules they are not ours to break. We must, for example comply with customs requirements and so become proficient with HF radio, computers, and the ways of email. I have not found a way of obtaining the latest immigration requirements via HF radio or from the non existent phones in some ports but do understand I am probably guilty for non compliance. We must comply but we retain the right to vote out stupidity and to vocally complain. I accept that Australia is the world's laughing stock but comply we must.

**Regards,  
Barry SV White Horse  
Cruising the Whitsunday Islands**

## The remarkable adventure of the first yacht to Visit Percy Island with Mick Cotter

Just finished looking at TCP thanks to the wonders of the www and your emailing list. I'm a bit late, but just finished reading your compilation on the Percy Is. Saga. We, by happenstance, were the first visitors to the island under Mick's tenancy. I just gave a brief sketch of that first visit of ours to a website (that your articles link to) that is compiling a history of Percy Is. In retrospect it was a more interesting visit in light of the history/controversy, than we knew at the time. Here's a copy of the sketch for your info.

Our first visit happened to coincide with Mick Cotter's arrival as the new lease holder. When we dropped anchor in West Bay there were no other boats in the anchorage. (Mick arrived, unbeknown to us, after we left the boat and were hiking up to the homestead) we went ashore and began exploring along with a young Aussie couple who were crewing with us at the time.

After looking thru the structures on the shoreline we went over the hill to the lagoon and saw an atv 4-wheeler at the dock but no one around. We found the trail to the homestead and began hiking up it. As we got to the top of the hill we heard a gun shot and soon caught up with the Aussie couple who were ahead of us (younger legs). They had heard the shot and decided to wait for us before proceeding. We knew nothing of the legal turmoil surrounding the island and so we unconcernedly continued the remaining half kilometre to the homestead.

Upon arriving there we saw the atv at the house (we assumed someone had arrived on the island as we were walking up the trail and had beat us to the homestead by riding the atv up the 'road track'). We 'halloed' the house and were quickly met by a multi-tattooed young man who introduced himself as 'Mick'. He was friendly and welcomed us to the island. He quickly explained that he and some friends were just arrived and he was the new lease holder. He asked if we had heard a gun shot and then explained that there were some hard feelings involved in the change over and that they had fired off a round to let their adversaries know that they were armed and capable of defending themselves.

He offered us water (which we accepted), but told us that the former occupants had emptied all the water tanks. (I don't know where the water came from that we drank, but I did see numerous water tanks around the house that were all empty.) Mick also showed us some notes that had (allegedly) been left around the homestead by the prior occupants which quite explicitly wished him ill will. His response to these notes had been the gun shot that we had heard as we approached the homestead.

As I said, Mick was quite hospitable and said that his plans for the island were to preserve its reputation as a must stop anchorage for passing sailors. He instructed me to tell all yachties that I came in contact with that although the island had changed hands, he intended to maintain its reputation as a friendly, safe, welcoming anchorage for all passing sailors. He wanted all to know that they were welcome to come anytime and have the use of island resources.

We've been back 4-5 times since and have found Mick good for his word. We've only seen him on one subsequent visit and again he was quite hospitable. The various caretakers that we have met have always been welcoming. If no one was in residence there was invariably a note posted on the homestead door stating that they were temporarily away and that any visitor was meant to make themselves at home and help themselves to any island resource that was needed. All subsequent visits found other boats in the anchorage so apparently the word did get out that Percy Is. would continue as a user friendly destination.

I never saw the island prior to 2001 under the previous occupants. I've heard nothing but good reports of their tenure. On our first visit there were lots of fruit trees--limes aplenty. The garden area showed that it once had been actively worked, but was mainly full of weeds. The drought situation has been hard on the island and subsequent visits have seen less fruit trees and no garden. The main house/yard has been cleaned up and a section of the house fashioned into a museum. We've gotten the weather from the caretaker on a couple of occasions as we are out of VHF range on the boat whereas up at the homestead they have internet access and I believe they can also get VHF reception. I've seen deer, horses, goats, and emu while hiking around the island. Caught fish and barbecued them at the 'a-frame and generally enjoyed every visit. Hopefully Percy is. Will continue to be the top spot that it is.

**David & Shirlee Goodgame,  
SV 'Hitchiker' 45' Crowther spindrift  
Bundaberg, Qld- kailua, Hawaii**

Firstly congratulations on your excellent campaign and well deserved win. We are very pleased, proud and hopeful to have you as our Member.

Hopeful because at the age of 62, I have seen a lot of governments come and go with a lot of fine intentions that fade after the election excitement is over and business clouds focus.

My wife and I have recently returned after 12 years of sailing our small catamaran yacht around the world. Whilst we were away we were very well treated by the officials in all countries we visited and it was a constant embarrassment to our national pride, to frequently hear Australia's reputation for hostile officialdom. Perhaps of interest to Government is the loss of current & potential revenue. Of interest to me as an Australian is our lost reputation for fairness and hospitality - not just fairness in the work place.

When we sailed out of Sydney in July 94, we left a society with a sense of fairness and bureaucracy with a sense of proportion. We returned in November 2006 to a country with bureaucracy gone mad and a strongly developed paranoia and sense of 'We & Them'. I particularly seek your support with having Australia's 96 hour rule revised, or at least some sense of proportion in its application. In addition having the Visa and length of time foreign yachts can stay in Australia reviewed by a person, or persons who have some understanding of the logistics of long distance cruising yachts - an increasing 'Baby Boomer Market'. There has been a lot published in the Yachting press about this situation. I am attaching the text of an article that I submitted to the Australian 'Multihull World' Magazine. It was published in their November edition. I recommend further reading on the web site of The Coastal Passage Newspaper. - www.thecoastalpassage.com.au and click on the photo of the current case of the Manzari's. You may well wonder that this is 'currentAustralia'?

Maxine, I realise that if you are not involved in a certain area, it may seem of little relevance to the general population, but I can assure you that there are a lot of people in the boating community and Australia's loss of sense of fairness, compassion and proportion under the previous Government needs to be addressed on many fronts.

I seek an appointment with you to discuss a strategy on addressing this and taking you up on your pledge to be a strong voice for Bennelong residents.

Regards,

Chris Ennor ,

SY Magic Carpet

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## Just a few questions...

Dear Mr Terry Price,  
Australian Customs Service

In Sept you replied to my queries with the following: *"It is recognised that smallcraft differ from commercial vessels in the amount and type of communications equipment many of them carry. Customs does not consider that it would be an effective use of resources to provide a 24/7 listening watch around Australia on VHF or HF, and therefore does not accept reporting by means other than those indicated above."*

Australia is your home Mr Price. Learn how to spell it.

I have a number of questions that I would appreciate some feedback on, some rough answers if you can, and some detailed ones where indicated.

You seem to indicate that Customs is pulling out all stops to prevent drugs etc being brought in on small craft. How come this huge expense in manpower, boats, guns, airplanes, satellite surveillance etc, does not include monitoring on VHF and HF, to allow the visiting yachties to assist?. You yourself have written in your reply *"It is worth noting that Customs has always sought to actively engage with members of the Australian yachting fraternity, primarily through our Customs Hotline program, which allows members of the public to report all suspicious border activities to Customs 24 hours a day on 1800 06 1800. Positive contributions to the Customs Hotline program from the yachting community will continue to provide real benefits for all Australians as Customs seek to fulfil our Border Protection obligations."*

How can the 'Australian Yachting Fraternity' 'provide real benefits' to the Customs people '24 hours a day' when they only have VHF or HF, and Customs has no listening watch?

Q, Are you only providing 24/7 watch on TELEPHONE? If you were serious about using the AYF to help in the 'fight' you would be listening in on VHF. The 'Court battles' that your people have 'won' recently are purely aimed at making a dollar.

Q. Does the Customs Dept give them any assistance in negotiating the minefield that is our 'Act', or is it discriminatory? are interpreters provided? What about legal aid? In 2 of the cases, the Masters concerned actually spoke to customs on phone or radio, and were given directions on how to enter. In one case where the vessel was 'arrested', they were actually towed in due to engine malfunction. Since Customs had spoken with these people, then given them directions, how come they did not give a warning re arrival times? Or is it a case of 'entrapment'?

Summary: Pretty simple really. Customs is fighting hard against drugs and protecting our borders. But it won't listen on VHF or HF to do so. It is getting tough on retired couples who have sold their house and can't afford a Sat-phone with e-mail and web access. The penalties for these nasty, nasty people, should provide enough money for the Govt to be able to afford a 24/7 VHF listening watch and thus solve the problem.

A few questions Mr Price. I look forward to your detailed answers, with reference to Acts. I expect to be able to use your reply someday in my defence, so make it accurate.

Sincerely,

Anthony Little

Skipper, Charter boat operator, Tax payer, Teacher.

# More LETTERS

## Clearing in, via Townsville

Dear Bob,

Probably like many others I have, for some time, followed the Australian customs and quarantine saga as it has been explored in the pages of the Coastal Passage. And I thought I knew enough to avoid or minimize the hassles. Last October when we returned from a short trip to the Louisiades, PNG, and attempted to do the 'right thing' at Townsville, I discovered how the system works well for those in the system but may not work so well for the yachties who use it.

After complying with the mandatory 96 hour arrival notification, two customs publications guided my actions:

1) *"When you arrive in Australia, you must first call at a port of entry where Customs, Quarantine and Immigration formalities can be completed. When entering Australian waters you are required to clearly display the International Pratique Q-flag (yellow). A further requirement is that the craft travels directly to an appointed boarding station."* (quoted from Custom's email entitled *"Customs acknowledges your report"*).

2) This same information is repeated in the Custom's booklet *"Information for Yachts traveling to Australia"*, page 4. In the same Custom's booklet (page 30) it clearly states (for Townsville) *"Boarding Station for Arrival : Designated international arrival facility is the Fuel Dock at the Breakwater Marina"*.

After motoring most of the last day, we arrived off Townsville after business hours and made directly for the Breakwater Marina fuel dock as per quoted customs directions. I had planned ahead and my mobile phone was working so I rang the after hours numbers for both customs and quarantine. Quarantine returned my call and agreed with my plan to tie up at the fuel dock overnight in quarantine until cleared the next morning. Quarantine would coordinate with customs. I tried to radio the marina office as quarantine advised but the only response was an unidentified voice telling me, "they've all gone home." A late afternoon on shore breeze had gotten up making anchoring outside the breakwater ill advised. There was no room, with our draft, to anchor inside the outer breakwater. We went in and tied up to the fuel dock, being careful to obey all the rules.

The next morning customs and quarantine officers very courteously and professionally cleared us in and I went up to the marina office to sort out our marina berth and fuel. I was amazed to find that the marina insisted that customs had no authority over the fuel dock and I would be charged the full daily marina rate (approx\$40) for our night in quarantine despite the fact that we did not have shore access to any facilities. My protests to management fell on deaf ears.

This incident led me to realize that customs has a few 'systems' issues in Townsville. I wrote to the acting manager of customs in Townsville who replied in part with: *"This is standard practice whereby Masters of arriving smallcraft, who are not going to clear Customs and Quarantine immediately, are to remain outside landfall until Officers attend at the vessel. There are a number of reasons for the existence for this procedure. Firstly, the Breakwater Marina is a privately owned and operated business. Customs and AQIS have an agreement with the Marina that direct arrival smallcraft can be directed to the fuel berth for the period of time required to clear the vessel. We do not hold exclusive rights over the operation of the fuel berth."*

I wrote to her again asking for clarification of the following hypothetical scenario: "A yacht arriving from overseas arrives off Townsville late at night due to unexpected weather conditions. There is a strong on shore wind making anchorage outside the marina breakwater unsafe. The tide is nearing low water (.6m possible min depth in channel) making entrance in the channel impossible. The yacht does not have a mobile phone but is able to contact port operations on VHF radio.

What options are open to this yacht awaiting clearance in the morning? You mentioned that: *"The area in which the Port of Townsville is proclaimed under the Customs Act, 1901, is fairly extensive."* Does this mean that it is within the regulations for a yacht to anchor in the lee of Magnetic Island (without going ashore) awaiting entry? If so I am somewhat confused by the standard 'Customs email acknowledgement' which in part states: *"A further requirement is that the craft travels directly to an appointed boarding station."* I am sure that from an administrator's point of view the requirements are clear but from a yachtsman's viewpoint some clarification is needed.

My last correspondence with customs management clarified that Magnetic Island is NOT part of the Port of Townsville and should such a scenario arise customs would deal with it *"sensibly."*

Now it became clear to me that the system was working well for Customs/Quarantine and for the marina but not a lot of thought or enquiry had gone into how it was working for the yachts who use the service. To be fair, if you can arrange your arrival on the right tide during week day business hours, you probably won't have a problem. Of course if you arrive out of hours at Cairns there is a relatively safe anchorage. In Gladstone there is a purpose-built berth in the marina.

Although, as far as I can discern, customs still doesn't believe there is a problem, there is a positive outcome. The CEO of the marina, Will Hatlingh, rang me in late November to apologise for the marina's handling of the incident and promised, that with the new construction underway, berthing space would be provided *AT NO CHARGE* for yachts awaiting clearance.

I hope this information is helpful to yachts planning a Townsville landfall.

Isaac Williamson,  
SY Bon Accord



Hi Bob,

How about a special little column in your paper about yachties trying to contact previous owners of yachts, I for one would like to contact the owner / builder of my yacht *Seawind*, I would like to see the plans and any early Photo's especially during the construction.

Antoine Cabrera of Mona Vale NSW. He called the yacht *Raison Etre* and was built/completed about 1988.

Larry Franklin from Cooroy Qld. June/July 1993 I believe this person changed the name to *Seawind*. I bought from the next owner.

The Australian Rego Number is 852657 AUS.

*I have phoned several A Cabrera's in Qld no luck so far, There is none listed in the white pages for NSW.*

How about: **"We want to contact you"**

Harry Bryce: 0418 540 500 calling Antoine Cabrera and Larry Franklin originally *"Raison Etre"* Aust.Reg.# 852657 now *"Seawind"*

Cheers,

Harry Bryce

Greetings Harry

*How about we use the letters section for now and see how it goes. If the demand is there, yes, we'll make a column.*

Bob

Hi Bob... another thing,

Can I please be put on your mailing list for Email editions of TCP.

How about new marina's putting aside a public jetty for cruising yachties so we can water up maybe give us time to get to town for groceries and not charge us for time spent in the marina provided we don't spend the night there say between 7am and 4pm is free time for supplying up the vessel.

Docklands Marina in the heart of Melbourne do not charge for day stays and only \$30.00 per night.

Councils make developers put in common play areas within developments so why not for Marina operators

Urrangan Harbour; where do you get water there? My yacht is 50ft with a 6ft draft the public jetty there is for toy boats only, the ramp at riverheads you have to carry over 100 ft of hose to access the tap and then you need a key from council. I have to go to Kingfisher at night so as not to interfere with the resort vessels.

Well those are my little beefs for now. LOL

Cheers,

Harry Bryce , SY SeaWind

*This is a tough one and a subject that concerns most every cruising boat. I find it rude and offensive that boats are increasingly being denied access to this human necessity. It's a shit town that doesn't provide toilets and water on the highway or main street for motorists yet for boats, that tend to stay longer as tourists, and spend more are treated like an unwanted step child. Marinas get left with the responsibility but they are in business. This isn't a recommendation but I know this goes on a lot; in a place where anchorage is near a marina, boats will come in at dawn thirty, tie up, water down and split before staff arrives. I know some marinas don't really care except they don't want a berth tied up. Some boats are bad about that, tying up for water and then going shopping as well.. Even so, for what yachts contribute, we deserve better.*

Cheers,

Bob

## Customs Latest....“legislative change” in the works???

In apparent response to coverage from The Coastal Passage and resulting anger from Australians everywhere and international condemnation, a shift has recently taken place in Customs and AQIS as entering yachts report easing of notice protocol and so-called Bio-Fouling examinations and fumigation enforcements. There are still issues to address and some reports are still coming in of excessive searches but the trend as reported by the letters below and numerous contacts with this office suggest a positive outlook. Last years imperatives are this years 'no worries mate'. A “legislative change” would be an opportunity to correct a plethora of injustices.

Hey Bob,

Made it back from NZ with the crew from your ad you placed. You can print this if good enough. (Bob's note; TCP posted a notice on the web site which got quick international action for Brett)

A Kiwi, a Kraut and a Pom get on a yacht to sail across the Tasman.

Sounds like an interesting mix for an ocean passage. Mmmmm. OK, after ringing Bob [TCP] and him placing an ad in for crew wanted, [wife & kids bailed due to some inconsiderate thing called "high school"] and two suckers [sailors] responding, off I went to the land of the long white cloud, to ready our Irwin 54 "Simple Pleasures" lying in her cold Auckland berth for yet another journey across an ocean. We have sailed her so far from East Coast USA to Bahama's, to Cuba, to Panama, to Galapagos and across the Pacific ending up in Fiji for a while, then on to chilly NZ.

Anyway, back to the perils of NZ, you need to watch out when first stepping out on the deck with your early morning coffee, I did this and ended up on my butt, however did save the biggest part of my coffee. Upon my close "butt first" inspection of the deck, yep - totally frozen.

My replacement crew, "Steve the Pom" and "Dirk the Kraut" turned up at the airport, full of excitement, and ready to conquer the great seas.

Full of diesel and enough food, we set off North to Opuia where we would clear immigration and customs. They are really switched on there, and handle lots of boats. Our weather window had been a little unsteady, and of course, it was blowing 27kn before we had even left the shore. After clearing, we sailed out on a blue sea with a blue sky, 23-27kn of SSW. The fella's were getting their sea legs as we sailed north tucked in behind the shelter of the North Island. Caught a yellow tailed kingfish and ate him for lunch. Yum Yum.

Dirk and Steve hadn't done any offshore sailing, so we sorted out the watches and got ready to clear North Cape around midnight. Evening brought a constant 31kn on the beam giving us close to 12 knots at times. We had a reefed main and staysail up, giving comfortable fast sailing conditions. First night is always hard to get quality sleep, all the strange noises so we sat up for a while wondering what the seas would be like after clearing the Cape. I took the mid watch 12-3, so to deal with any adjustments required. Seas ended up quite reasonable, maybe 18ft, with wind howling a bit in the mid thirties. Full moon made it pleasant enough.

Next day eased to high twenties and came around to the south. We sailed NNW curving west as the wind easted.

The boys were happy, progress was fast and no seasickness amongst us. Cooking was a little awkward as we would sideslide down a wave and charge up the side of the next. Very difficult to keep a plate of food on the bench.

Day three continued to ease, giving us a broad reach in 22kn and abating seas. Easier to cook, Steve and I shared the job, attempting to outcook each others

concoctions. Day four saw us struggling for breeze with it right up our choof. With sheets eased and a low lazy sea, we were running in 14kn of SE. Dirk was even keen with the fishing rod after landing our kingfish lunch previously. Early evening, we dropped the main which had been shadowing the Genoa, and motored at low rpm to keep the miles rolling under the keel. The cookoff was getting serious now, Dirk was looking fat as butter complaining that his wife will put him on a starvation diet once we get there. Day five was on a sheet of glass, slight undulations were easing away as the day progressed. Now with no sails, we slid over a mirror finish taking photo's, stopping for a midday swim in 3.5km deep crystal clear water.

Steve was first in, followed by me off the bow rail. Dirk chickened for a while, stating "krauts like being on the water, not in it". We told him he was a chicken, so in he went, with eyes big as dinner plates, looking for those big submarine size sharks the imagination knows are lurking with their mouths open. It does give you a funny feeling out there, with the cobalt blue depths.

We motored all night and day six, searching for signs of a breeze. None to be had. Same that night, cold beer in the evening, watching the sun go down and the moon and stars get so bright. Only on the ocean have I witnessed the sparkles to such an extent.

Day seven was the first flying fish found on deck, and mid morning, some slight ripples ran over the surface and 4 knots of east set in, not enough to do anything with when motoring at 7kn WNW. We spotted a whale moving around, and without getting too close, we observed him for a time before heading west yet again. Cape Moreton was spotted around lunchtime, and we were tied up at the Q dock in Manly Marina by 8pm that night. Customs came and were very courteous and professional, after all I had read, our fears were quelled.

They were very interested in their bad reputation and are working to alleviate this. We drank all the beer that night, fell asleep, awaking to AQIS on our doorstep. They too were most pleasant, and went well out of their way to welcome us home.

Dirk and Steve still talk to me so all is well there. Will have to get together for a BBQ with Kippers, some Sauerkraut and some Lamb.

7 1/2 days of fun ended.

Brett, Dirk and Steve. mates on yacht "Simple Pleasures".

*Greetings Brett and crew  
Glad to hear it went well and interested, but not surprised at your treatment at entry.*

cheers  
Bob

Dear Bob,

I would like to add to the positive letter from Brenda and Mick Rogers in issue 27, regarding the help they received from customs and immigration Brisbane and also from the Coastguard at Mooloolaba.

We too, have had a good experience. I would like to suggest that T.C.P. could conceivably have the power to change the world!

Before departing Noumea, we had heard all sorts of stories. A Dutchman told us that when you go to Australia they could take all your food, leaving you with nothing to eat. An American was expecting to have all her souvenirs confiscated. A New Zealander told us quarantine might take out a camera and inspect our bottom!

We recently checked in to Newcastle, N.S.W. We were well ahead of our predicted arrival time due to good winds (unusual, I know). As soon as we were in range, we contacted V.M.R. Port Stephens, who contacted customs for us as we were due to arrive in the middle of the night. Customs passed on the coordinates of a quarantine buoy we could pick up. They told us to get some sleep and they would process us in the morning.

The formalities were a breeze and the quarantine guy even took the time to explain to Molly and Tom why you needed to declare if you had animals on board (could be because we wrote on our form that we had 2 feral kids on board!) He explained why they confiscated certain foods and Tom then proceeded to offer him the contents of the galley. He only took the fresh stuff, which was expected, and instead of taking our baskets from Tonga, he asked us to put them in the freezer to kill any alien insects! A sensible solution I thought. The customs guy asked politely if he could take some swabs to check for drugs, which didn't worry us, as we didn't have any grass on board, or even on our bottom. (They didn't get a camera out either!)

It seems to us, that as long as you advise Australia you are on your way, consume your fresh stuff before you get here and don't arrive with a boat load of drugs and weevils, you will be fine.

Let's put out that simple message to help foreign cruisers to be prepared. We have a beautiful country to share. I'm sure I speak for the Australian cruising community when I say, that we want cruisers from overseas to have a positive experience arriving at our ports.

Cheers,  
Kerry Alexander  
S.V. 'Aussie Oi'

*Greetings Aussie Oi's  
The Dutchman, American and the Kiwi were all relating accounts of encounters with ACS and AQIS that were also reported to TCP from a number of vessels earlier in 07. Many vessels reported an underwater camera was used to inspect bottoms and even water tanks!. Especially foreign vessels complained of "official" and costly pest inspections and fumigations of timber vessels.*

Cheers  
Bob

G'day TCP,

Having read and followed the drama of Customs on entry to Australia I have taken some precautions for my own entry on a passage from NZ with an interesting result.

I have an email which I will forward and

should be self explanatory.

Thanks for the good read and coverage.

Max Burgess

Dear Mr Burgess,

*Thank you for your enquiry. It is recognised that notice must be given not later than 96 hours before arrival and there are shorter reporting periods if the journey does not take this length of time. You may be aware that the relevant section of the Customs Act limits reporting to not earlier than 10 days before arrival. Customs recognises the difficulty with this latter for smallcraft/pleasure craft and is considering steps to distinguish between commercial vessels and other types of craft in proposed legislative change. (editors emphasis)*

*Therefore Customs will accept your report if it is received not later than 96 hours before arrival. You may make it at any time before then and I suggest you do so from Nelson before departure. I also note you will have a mobile phone on board and I suggest you call the port of your arrival when within range and your final destination has been established. Contacting us in this manner will facilitate your entry with Customs and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service. Please direct any further mails to me if this does not satisfy your enquiry.*

Yours sincerely

Jenny Robinson  
Director Seaports  
Australian Customs Service  
Canberra  
phone: +61 2 62455431

I think this, being in writing, heralds a recognition by Customs that they could have done it better and if this email were to be produced to a court it would kill their prosecution. I can send a certified copy of the email if required. This has all happened because you and us fellow yachties have made a fuss about it. Congratulations!

The next thing to do is to be active in the drafting of the amendments to the legislation, i.e., lobbying to our local members, to make sure that us 'grotty yachties' are covered.  
Max

*TCP did contact Ms. Jenny Robinson of Customs by email but did not receive a reply as yet but the lack of distinction in Customs enforcement between yachts and "commercial vessels" (usually defined as being any vessel of 300 tons or greater, see US and other nations entry policies as listed in TCP # 24) has been the critical point of dispute. In TCP #26 the original notice of the 96 hour rule was published in it's entirety. Not one word in that notice mentioned "yachts", "recreational craft" or any other term that would infer reference to yachts.  
more letters and comment, page 9*



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# Australian Customs and Quarantine in the News

## Customs Destroys Fishing Fleet

possible retaliation against yachts feared

by Bob Norson with press releases from Australian Customs Service

**"53 foreign fishers caught in Australian waters - Tuesday, 27th November 2007**

An operation coordinated by Border Protection Command has led to the apprehension of five Indonesian fishing vessels after they were intercepted inside the Australian Fishing Zone.

Following initial detection by a Coastwatch Dash 8 surveillance aircraft, Australian Customs Vessel Triton apprehended the vessels approximately 170 nautical miles north west of Darwin on Saturday, 24 November.

The total crew on board the five vessels was 53 fishers.

The vessels were allegedly fishing for *Trepang*, a marine slug more commonly known as sea cucumber or sandfish. Australian Fisheries Management Authority officers found approximately 2,300 kilograms of *Trepang* on board the apprehended vessels.

All five vessels were deemed unseaworthy or posed a quarantine risk and were subsequently destroyed at sea.

Commander Border Protection Command, Rear Admiral James Goldrick, praised the efforts of personnel involved in the apprehension of the vessels.

The fishers were taken aboard Australian Customs Vessel Triton and were transported to Darwin for processing."

The above release from Australian Customs came on the heels of previous reports of similar activities in the northern regions, including a mission to Ashmore Reef covered by Australian TV that depicted customs personnel firing their new .50 Calibre machine guns and a crowd of

sobbing captured Indonesian fishermen.

The boats of the fishermen were destroyed. It seems all intercepted fishing vessels from Indonesia are "unseaworthy" or pose a "quarantine risk". How this state of unseaworthiness or quarantine risk can be immediately determined at sea is unknown.

While poaching on Australian territorial waters is an age old problem, some yachtsmen are concerned that Indonesia may take revenge against Australian targets including visiting yachts. Already Indonesia is enforcing clearance bond issues that were not acted upon before. Also, fishing villages that had been recently discovered as excellent cruising destinations, (See TCP # 16 "There be Dragons" by Graeme Hurst of SV *Quiet Achiever*) are feared to be possibly hostile now that many fishing ports have been affected by the destruction of the vessels.

According to an ex professional international fishing boat skipper interviewed by TCP, a common arrangement for some of those boats would be that the crew do not own the boat but would be held responsible for it's loss. If this is true the effect on some fishing villages may be compounded. A cruising yacht with much experience in Indonesian waters contacted by TCP claims it is possible this spiral of desperation could have the effect of increases in poaching and even eventual violence directed at anyone perceived as a party to the enforcement.

Cruising yachts are urged to use caution when visiting villages in Indonesia that may recently have been affected.

## Customs and Police Board All Boats

### for Random Searches

**"Joint Operation targets illegal activities in Australian waters - Tuesday, 27th November 2007**

A joint agency operation conducted off the east coast of Australia has seen 26 vessels stopped and inspected for compliance with State and Federal laws.

The operation was targeted at detecting any illegal activities in Australian waters.

Operation 'Sirius' targeted all vessels in the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) within 200 nautical miles of the coast between Ballina and Tweed Heads. Similar operations were carried out during Operation Baker in September 2006 and Operation Imagist in April 2007.

During the operation, merchant vessels, small craft and fishing boats were stopped and boarded at sea.

Operation Sirius involved the Police Launch Alert and the Australian Customs Vessel, Roebuck Bay. A Coastwatch Dash 8 surveillance aircraft also provided assistance.

NSW Police Marine Area Command's Inspector, Joe McNulty, said these operations strengthened the operational capacity of agencies involved in the policing and enforcement of Australia's offshore maritime zones.

"The execution of the operation reinforced the effectiveness of the established relationship between the various agencies' intelligence teams," Inspector McNulty said.

Customs Manager Enforcement Operations, Peter Hughes, said that Customs officers had the power to board a range of vessels, whether Australian

registered or foreign registered, under the Customs Act 1901.

"This operation highlights the commitment of law enforcement agencies to work together in investigating a broad range of illegal activity in Australian waters," Mr Hughes said.

Police and Customs teams made three arrests for illegal firearms and the possession of prohibited drugs (cannabis). Numerous fishing breaches were detected and will be investigated by fisheries authorities.

Operation 'Sirius' was coordinated by NSW Police Marine Area Command and supported by Customs, NSW Police Tweed Local Area Command, Australian Fisheries Management Authority, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Australian Federal Police, NSW Maritime Authority, QLD Water Police and QLD Fisheries."

As the above report failed to mention or describe the quantity of weapons and marijuana seized, it is likely to have been small.

As this kind of random search and seizure is unusual in many countries, it remains to be seen if this news further tarnishes Australia's reputation among international tourist and visiting yachts.

News that Australian Customs may now be asking for a saliva sample from entering yachts, ostensibly for drug testing, is also an unusual entry formality. At time of press, TCP has not been able to find another country that uses this test on visiting tourist or returning nationals without "probable cause".

The budget for the operation was not reported but due to the vessels employed and the various agencies involved, it would have been substantial.



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# Incompetent Bunglers... OR Ruthless Revenue Raisers???



Marine Safety Queensland has a long history of confrontation and reported bad attitude towards the cruising fleet (see page 11 "Permission to Come Aboard" and lower right). For years reports have been coming into TCP like the incident reported below left and more. Charges that the enforcement is little more than revenue raising are common. The wide spread nature of the incidents belies any claim of a rogue operator and makes it very difficult to understand how MSQ in Brisbane isn't aware that it's personnel may be habitually operating outside their own laws. Foreign and interstate vessels seem to be particularly targeted. MSQ was invited to respond to these claims. A call was made to Queensland Transport and TCP asked for the appropriate contact for a media inquiry. A copy of TCP's inquiry and the quickly received 'response' (received 4.1.08) is printed below but nothing after that.

## 'Ignorance of the Law is no Excuse!'

By Chris Ennor SC *Magic Carpet*

I recently returned from a circumnavigation and have certainly been taken aback by the voracious approach of our 'officials' in Australia. We were very well treated in the 50 odd countries we visited and I have been embarrassed by the treatment that overseas cruisers get in Australia.

A couple of weeks ago an American cruiser was booked outside MidTown Marina, Bundaberg for not carrying life jackets in his tender and threatened with further prosecution if he did not register his tender in Qld. Now this man had been in the country less than 2 weeks, he was going out to a marina mooring ( a distance of 100 metres on a windless day on a river approx 150 metres wide. The Water Police Officer insisted this was a safety issue and would brook no conversation about the matter. Along with another Aussie Yachtie I went up to MSQ and asked for clarification of the Legislation. Sure enough the officer was clearly wrong on two counts. Firstly a tender (if operated within 2 miles of the mothership) does not need to be registered - this is specified on page 5 of the MSQ Booklet. Secondly the legislation specifically exempts foreign recreational vessels (if in Qld for less than 12 months) from registration. In the legislation and clearly on page 50 of the booklet the heading for the safety equipment (lifejackets etc) clearly states 'for vessels that are required to be, or are registered'. So irrespective of the size of outboard motor (in this case 5hp) Tenders and overseas vessels are not required to be registered and therefore carry equipment specified for registered vessels.

The foreign cruiser in this case, at the suggestion of MSQ, has returned the ticket to the OIC of Urgan Water Police with a request that it be withdrawn as it does not comply with the Legislation. A few weeks have passed and no acknowledgement of his letter has been received. I guess in this modern era of 'we & them' we can longer expect courtesy.

The Water Police official was quick to point out to the foreign visitor that 'ignorance of the law is no excuse', so should the wrongful actions of the officer, in this case, be then considered Harassment?

It would seem that any yachtie that has been booked in his tender ( provided they were within 2 miles of the mothership) for not complying with safety regulations set out for Registered Vessels, would be within their rights to request a refund of the fine.

Considering that foreign vessels when they arrive, in Australia, are not given any indication of state legislation responsibilities, even if the officer had have been correct, an appropriate measure from a more civil age would have been to advise the visitor of his responsibilities and give him a warning, but alas, in this and examples with foreign yachties and the Boating and Fisheries inspectors on the Burnett River, the age of civility and consideration seems to have passed, at least on these waterways in Qld.

If you check the MSQ website and look up 'Legislation', then Safety Regulations 2004, section 60 deals with whom the legislation applies. 60 (2) says: TO WHOM IT DOES NOT APPLY. 60 (2) (i) covers tenders when operated within 2 NM of the mothership. 60 (2) (l) covers foreign recreational vessels in Qld waters for less than one year. It is very clear, in black & white. So when they book a foreign vessel for not complying with the regulations, they are TOTALLY WRONG. They either have not made themselves familiar with the regulations that they purport to enforce, or it is 'harassment'. It can only be one or the other!

*Editors note; It appears from the excerpts of the act listed below that registration is not required for a foreign vessel unless the ship stays in Queensland for a year or more, further, that any (legally) non registered tender may not have to carry the gear. Chris Ennor reports this is reiterated in the "Guide to recreational Boating and Fishing" published by MSQ, May 2007, pages 5 and 50.*

*There are other aspects of this enforcement that appear to be at odds with the regulation as well. Skippers are encouraged to study the regulation document themselves as it might not be advisable to depend on the expertise of the local water cop for interpretation.*

*To assist in that regard TCP will post on the "Issues" page and "New Stuff" page a link to the document in PDF. It's about 1.1 meg pdf and 280 pages, much of which is devoted to commercial operators and other material unrelated to a cruiser so not as difficult as it sounds. If you have a computer on board it might be a good idea to have it in your "documents" folder... just in case.*

*The final update? Chris informs TCP that MSQ has advised to pay up or go to court.*

## Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004 Division 4 Registration of Ships

### section 60

(2) However, part 5, division 2 of the Act does not apply to the following ships;

(f) a recreational ship that—

(i) is not powered; or

(ii) is powered by an engine of less than 3kW;

(l) a recreational ship from a foreign country if—

(i) the ship is in Queensland waters for less than 1 year; and

(ii) the ship's owner is not an individual or person mentioned in subsection (1)(a)(i), (ii) or (iii); (*Queensland resident or operating a business out of Queensland*)

To: Wayne Watson,  
mailto:Wayne.e.watson@transport.qld.gov.au  
Greetings Wayne,

I have come across cases of water police issuing infringement notices to vessels that appear to be issued improperly, for example, safety equipment and registration violations applied to foreign vessels in Queensland for less than one year. I also have complaints from Australian vessels, of being charged with equipment violations (EPIRB) that the operators claim is incorrect due to the nature of the waters they were in when charged. Quite a few of these kinds of incidents have been reported to this office over several years and over a widespread area of the state.

For a recent example check infringement # 00573300.

Will MSQ acknowledge this problem and if so, how will MSQ answer the charge that the activities of the water police appear to the boating community to be mere revenue raising or incompetence?

Most reports mention a belligerent and aggressive attitude on the part of the offending officers as well.

The Coastal Passage would very much like to report that this issue is being investigated and consequently, the victims compensated and the officers retrained I look forward to seeing this resolved on behalf of the fleet.

Cheers,  
Bob Norson,  
The Coastal Passage

Thanks Bob,

I've forwarded your query for a response to be prepared. I am on leave from this afternoon so one of my colleagues will contact you with a response.

Cheers,  
Wayne

commentary by Bob Norson

**From the TCP archive.. This segment was originally published in TCP # 16, "Passage People" and illustrates that especially international cruising folk feel they have been treated unfairly. They were done at Horseshoe Bay, Magnetic Island. Nowhere in the world has a worse reported reputation for aggressive and unfair enforcement than Queensland. Hey! We're number one!**



Jeff Bowers and Christie Weiser left America quite a few years ago and don't seem in a hurry to return though the Aussie officials seem to have been encouraging them to move along. They were "singled out" at an anchorage for "on the spot fines" because some of their safety gear didn't match local standards. With that subject raised and with the radical changes occurring in Australian laws, Jeff came up with a cute story called the "Boiled frog syndrome." He said if you want to boil a frog you don't throw him into boiling water cause he will just jump out right away. But if you put a frog into cold water and start raising the temperature slowly..... the frog just sits there until he is dead boiled! ..... anyone feeling warm yet?!

# Pirates on my Right and Bad News on my Left..

by Kate Lovegrove of SY *Delight*, 38 foot Lightwave cat

It was a planned short trip. Took two months off for a quick cruise in the Whitsunday's. June-July '07, which was two of the coldest-damp June-July on record. And 2 incidents of one description or another.

#1. We arrived in Nara Inlet (Hook Island) amid much rain. It rained and howled all night. But weren't those waterfalls spectacular the next day!? Didn't count them, but they were everywhere, must have been millions of litres per minute. As much as it had howled that night all boats (and there were many) behaved and remained where they were. Many congrats to the charterers!

We were anchored the top of the inlet a good distance from everyone else. A large professionally skippered charter boat joined us mid-afternoon and anchored approx. 200m above us.

All was good (though still freezing) in the world. 5am BANG BANG THUMP! We left our warm cozy bunk ever so quick, threw on jackets, grabbed torches to find a 60 ft+ boat beam on to our starboard bow with our bow prodder pierced through its solid side rails but not (quite) piercing the windows. No one on deck. We began attempting to fend this vessel off ours as a young deckhand appeared through the companionway. Within some minutes, we presume, the skipper who swore (as you would), made some comment of the length of chain he had out and attempted to rectify the situation.

But in the course of us attempting to fend it off, which had holed the gel coat, my husband fell in. I threw a torch at the fairly bamboozled 12 year old on board and ordered he keep an eye on his father and not lose sight as he swam back to the transom, whilst I kept an eye on the deckie jumping up and down on our prodder. The skipper of the vessel started the engine and went to sort out their chain and anchor; my skipper was back on board, safe, but injured.

Daylight was approaching. They'll come and see us then. Check damage; was the skipper ok? You know, those sorts of mandatory pleasantries; boat name, skippers name, etc. The vessel had re-anchored close to the top end of the inlet. And *gobsmocked* we watched it up anchor and disappear! All we could do was the same as we had no mobile coverage there and we planned on doing so that morning anyway, though now for medical reasons. While we had decent painkillers onboard, the skippers knee was damaged, swollen and painful, obviously in need of attention. I called a bareboat charter and gave a description of the vessel. Not a 60 ft.+ around those like it- as we did not know its name (thanks for their assistance). I called MSQ Shute Harbour (thanks Rod there really are some gems in some Govt. depts!). He (we) were flabbergasted that this had occurred. With mobile moral support (thanks *Dancing Dolphin*) and very real assistance and support (thank you so much Bernie & Aileen, Bowen) we went to Bowen to have skippers knee tended to. Sadly, if you aren't a current patient on the books in that fabulous town (well, we love it), then you spend time in outpatients at Bowen Hospital. *Provisional* diagnosis is torn crucial ligaments/tendons.

Filled in required marine incident report and faxed to MSQ Shute Harbour. Did they ever hear from the Charter Company? Nah. We had called the company and reported the incident. The Director's of the company told us their vessel should not have been there because of poor (!!) holding. That they'd need to contact the skipper, etc. and they would let him know what his responsibilities were regarding incidents at sea. Wow!! I checked again with them the following day, but they apparently hadn't had contact with him and the following day wouldn't return my call, nor attempts from MSQ to contact them. We received a letter from MSQ some time later confirming the report had been investigated and the skipper charged with the offences of failing to render assistance and failure to report an incident. We footed the repair bill rather than go to the insurance company (premiums are way too high as they are!).

Never heard from the outfit at Shute Harbour. Not so much as an apology or inquiry into my hubby's knee (still damaged).

#2. Then the "pirates"... we encountered them in the form of Queensland Transport, QB & FP or Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol. We'd departed Hill Inlet after a few glorious days (great place for cats Bob!), through Solway Passage to Thomas Island and overnight there. Departed the following morning to Brampton Island; dropped the pick. The following morning when hubby and children went ashore, I observed QB & FP making pests of themselves in the anchorage. I retrieved our safety gear and put it all in the cockpit for inspection without the need for the officers to board. Regardless, they stated they wanted to board. I denied them permission stating "house" rules excludes anyone coming on board if only myself, or the children, are on board unless they are close friends or family. The gear was given a quick check and then they enquired if we had an EPIRB on board. I stated that we did and when I went below to retrieve it I heard one of them call that they were going to board. With the EPIRB I ran back to the cockpit and again requested him to remain in his boat (he wasn't a friendly or happy chappie from the outset and I sensed he was becoming even less so). He took the EPIRB, deemed it out of date as the expiry date couldn't be read (lesson here do not store where it may be subject to large amounts of UV rays).

I was handed the \$150 fine, but before accepting it, I pointed out that we'd not been in waters where an EPIRB was mandatory. He rejected that, saying we must have if we'd come from Bowen. I didn't pursue the point, but clearly, on page 28 of the Official Tide Time 7 Safety Guide, put out by Qld. Transport; this shows we had remained out of the boundaries of where it is essential to carry an EPIRB. I wrote to the Dept. disputing the fine (as one is morally obliged to do), and arguing various aspects of the whole incident. I am now required to produce a copy of the ships log to prove our innocence having been judged guilty from the start.

## Response from *Windjammer*

TCP contacted Barefoot Cruises, operators of vessel "*Windjammer*", the vessel involved, through their web site and received a prompt reply to the inquiry concerning the allegations from SY *Delight*. Below is the response.

The "collision" from my understanding was low impact as both *Windjammers* crew were fending off *Delight* at the time.

· From the time they touched to the time they motored off was a matter of minutes.

· The damage to *Windjammer* was a minor 45mm scratch on the port toe rail. I personally spoke with the lady of the vessel *Delight* the following morning and assured her that I was taking this incident seriously and I recommended she notify MSQ of the incident from her end.

· An incident report was lodged with MSQ by the skipper on his return to port.

· MSQ did investigate the incident and even took photo's of the scratch on *Windjammers* toe rail.

The incident was not caused by negligence but rather the unfortunate fouling of the anchor and the increase in wind speed during the night. The crew in my view responded to the situation in a proper manner. The crew of *Delight* on the other hand, were apparently panicking in the cockpit and did not assist in fending off *Windjammer* other than the gentleman that ended up in the water as he stepped over the guard rail to help out.

*Windjammer* re anchored at the southern end of Nara Inlet (incident took place at the northern end) and left the following morning just after sunrise and did not pass *Delight*.

My only concern with this incident was that the skipper did not call on *Delight* as a courtesy the following morning prior to his departing, even though, in his words they were a long way up the inlet and it was such a small incident.

This skipper is currently not employed by Barefoot Cruises.

Ashley Kerr

Managing Director, Barefoot Cruises Australia

## Ruthless Revenue Raisers??

by Bob Norson

Kate Lovegrove did send supporting documents along with her story at left. These include copies from the log, copy of the incident report with the charter vessel, and very interesting, copies of letters received from MSQ regarding her objection to the infringement notice about the EPIRB. According to Kate and supported by her log, the contact with QB&FP did occur in waters where an EPIRB is **not** required. See excerpt from the "Act" at lower left. According to Kate, MSQ requested a copy of her log to verify they had not *previously* been in open waters. This is surprising in that the law states "in smooth waters" indicating the fact at the time, rather than "always operates in.." According to a copy of a letter from MSQ's Wendy Burns, MSQ did confirm investigating through VMR records that SY *Delight* had been in partially smooth waters to Thomas Island two days before but when it came to supporting Kate's position, "unfortunately.." VMR records are "unavailable". Another interesting passage in a letter to Kate From Burns of MSQ dated 12 10 07, "The officers identified themselves as required and this can be heard on the digital recording made at the time." Kate reports she asked to obtain a copy of that recording and received this on 16 01 08, "We are not aware if the officers recorded your conversation or not."

The facts of this case and others seem to indicate that QB&FP officers often make what may be unwarranted charges and that MSQ engages in cover-up or at least selective provision of information to boaties that may protest the charges.

There are several other points addressed in the MSQ letters that should be examined by skippers, especially live aboard sailors. To serve that purpose, TCP will make copies of these letters available on the "Issues" section of the TCP web site soon.

### Division 2 EPIRB for all ships

#### 9 All ships in Queensland waters to be equipped with EPIRB

(1) This section applies to a ship in Queensland waters other than a ship—

- (a) in smooth waters; or
- (b) in partially smooth waters; or
- (c) within 2n miles from land.

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# MSQ..Long term reputation for..

From a letter to Kate Lovegrove from Wendy Burns (see previous page) of MSQ; **“The officers are generally very experienced and familiar with maritime law and the areas in which they operate. [therefore] We accept the officers assertion to the elements of the offense...”** TCP has many complaints about the lack of professionalism and common courtesy of the water police. From Nate of SY Sunraiker who was cited for lack of an epirb whilst anchored within a few boat lengths of the mainland near Airlie Beach to the account below that was published in TCP # 7.

## PERMISSION TO COME ABOARD???

We would like to share our recent experience whilst cruising in the Hinchinbrook Channel that has left us far from impressed with the men in blue.

We were making our way back to our vessel after fishing in our tender in a nearby creek when we were confronted by a police officer & fisheries/national parks officer in a high powered inflatable. We were immediately quizzed as to whether we were using crab traps & how many we had.

Then a request of “Which boat is yours?” We indicated our nearby vessel & were sternly told that they would meet us back there.

The officers inflatable then proceeded back to our vessel at speed, tied up off the stern & boarded our vessel without invitation while we were still some distance away. At this my husband saw red & I quickly consoled him as we drew nearer as I thought a volley of abuse was not the best way to handle the situation. Upon reaching our vessel we politely asked how we could assist albeit through gritted teeth. We were requested to supply safety gear & upon opening the companionway to obtain flares & EPIRB, the police officer made himself well at home in our settee complete with black soled police boots. Still we remained polite & helpful supplying all in-date & correct safety equipment. Whilst we were away from the boat we had left our water maker running & the police officer demanded to know what the mechanical noise was & would not accept our explanation. To allay his suspicions we had to show him the water maker in action.

By now our happy façade was slipping & my husbands blood was boiling. We asked if there was anything else & the reply was unbelievable.....”As you are from NSW do you have a cruising permit to be here? This police officer not only boarded our vessel unaccompanied & without permission in black soled boots, he also didn't know the requirements of interstate vessels. Astounding. Upon our protest of not requiring a permit he conferred with the fisheries/national parks officer (who had remained in our cockpit) who confirmed we were right and also passed a quick look of “lighten up” Now appearing somewhat abashed a quick departure ensued leaving us shaking our heads & feeling somewhat invaded & asking if this was all necessary.

Unfortunately this incident has made us somewhat wary & next time we may think twice about being so accommodating.

Names withheld by request

Also in the correspondence from Burns of MSQ, **“Further the officers have the legislative authority to board a ship with or without the presence of the owner being on board the ship.”** In the case of a live aboard craft, this has been challenged by legal information supplied by our own Chris Ayres. According to law referred to in the article, your vessel is a place of residence and afforded all the protections associated with that status. A water cop may try to bully a person into allowing it but if the resident of the boat is firm the cop may put him/herself in civil jeopardy by boarding without permission. The boaty may have a case of damages against the individual cop for any harm including mental stress. The resident even has the power to physically defend their property according to an important legal precedent. This article is available from the TCP web site. Go to “issues”>”Your Vessel is Your Home” also see “Right to board?”.

# Car Parking Concerns for Breakwater

## A resident of Breakwater Marina in Townsville, express’s concern. Management replies.

I realize that there is development works underway disrupting all facilities

My major concern is that when the development works have taken place there will only be one car park for each 4 wet berths. i.e. 0.25 car parks per wet berth. Mackay City has 0.6 car parks for each wet berth that is nearly 2 ½ times what is being proposed here. Unless there is a long term park provided then there will be spill over parking onto The Strand and I don't think that will work

Traffic generation and land use are inseparable. Unless traffic is properly provided for there will be congestion and the development will fail to be successful. It is imperative to get the balance right. All I see at the moment is the optimization of the development on a restricted site. Unfortunately it will not be recognized by the average person until the development is sold off and it has proceeded into an operation phase. No doubt by then the developer(s) will have disappeared with the profits in their back pockets.

By the way I counted the parked car on a normal Tuesday night, which is a non busy mid week time. There were 70 cars parked on the total establishment and this would relate only to the live aboard. There are 225 berths i.e. a ratio of 0.31 to each wet berth. When it is a good boating weekend this figures than will easily be up in the high one hundreds for the existing marina.

The current proposal is to increase the marina to 434 wet berth and I am advised that there will only be about 100 to 110 car parks., Why do we want to cause frustration like this.

Please don't say to me that 90 of these berths are being sold to MIRVAC who will be owners of the 171 units and 18 dwellings going on the site adjacent to the Marina and they will have there own car parks. The problem here is that they only provide car parking at the rate of 1 per unit and one visitor car park per 5 units for visitors. We all know that most modern couples have two cars – one for the husband and one for the wife. I know that I will not give up my own personal car and neither will my wife so why should I expect anyone else to do the same.

So the spill over car parking from the units will take up most of the marina spaces. My personal opinion is that the amenity of the Marina is heading for disaster.

Please note I am sending a copy of the email to the Coastal Passage and requesting them to include it as a letter to the editor.

Thank you

Brian Bailey

Dear Bob,

### RE: Brian Bailey Letter of Concern

City Pacific believes that Mr Bailey is not aware of the measures that have been put in place to ensure adequate parking for the Breakwater Marina berth users during and after redevelopment of Mariner's Peninsula and would like to highlight the following facts: The 1:4 car parking ratio was established in the Surplus Casino Land Scheme by the State Government as part of the *Breakwater Island Casino Agreement Amendment Act 2006*.

This has been done in proper consultation with the Townsville City Council and has given consideration to the following:

>It has factored in that 90 berths have been allocated to the future adjacent unit owners in the Mirvac development and 165 to the Resort Corp development adjacent to the Jupiters Hotel and Casino complex.

>The discontinuation of the boatlift and shipyard activities.

>All future residential car parking, including visitor parking to be provided on the respective development lot.

>These car parks will be allocated as 'Exclusive Use' areas for Marina car parking under the Mariner's Peninsula Principle Body Corporate Community Management Scheme (CMS).

>These car parks will be signed for 'Marina car parking only' and the marina manager will have the right to enforce this requirement and tow away non-marina cars if necessary.

The Marina will implement a “Marina car” vehicle identification system to manage this. As such 'spill-over' parking from the apartments cannot take-up car parks allocated to the marina. Mirvac intends to provide more car parks than the 1 car park per apartment required under the town plan. The Stanton Apartments (currently under construction) have 1.8 car parks per apartment plus visitor car parks. It is intended that later stages of the development will have an equivalent or higher car parking ratio per apartment.

City Pacific has put a high premium on not just ensuring ongoing amenity of the Marina, but vastly improving it. This will be demonstrated by the new drop-off pontoon, the sewerage pump-out facilities currently under construction as well as the refurbishment and extension of the Marina ablution facilities that will commence in 4 to 6 weeks.

A new Marina administration building will also be constructed with upgraded software and surveillance systems to lift the level of service provided to the berth holders. We have already upgraded the refuelling facility with security and surveillance to follow in due course.

City Pacific has an ongoing relationship with Mirvac, the developer of the residential sites on Mariner's peninsula, and we are working together under the umbrella of a Principal Body Corporate Scheme to ensure the outcome as provided above.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further or if you would like more information on the future development of the Breakwater Marina.

Yours sincerely,

Will Hattingh  
Development Executive Marinas

# PNG: Good sailing but Rascols are Hassles

By Don Woodford

I've just given a helicopter pilot Roy Griffiths a hand fixing his yacht *O'LGeta* so that he can travel around to Lae from Port Moresby for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in a week.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2008 he was attacked at 2.30am by 2 rascols at a village called Kaparoka in Papua New Guinea. They boarded his yacht with a 2 foot bush knife when he woke up at Kaparoka village near Hood Point. His crew, Michael a National, dived overboard as soon as he saw the bushknife in the moonlight. The rascal chopped the rope anchor line so the boat was now drifting. This is 40nm ESE of Port Moresby. Roy Griffiths came up from his sleeping berth at the bow and was lucky when the attacker hit the bow rail instead of him and as he backed around the boat and he fell backwards over the stern. Luckily he stayed under the boats side until the 2 rascols had ransacked the yacht. They took a radio, food, 2 mobiles and 40 litres of diesel.

After the rascols had left Roy climbed back on board and motored quickly away and back toward Port Moresby.

Meanwhile Michael had swum ashore and got the villagers at Kaparoka to look after him and he rang his Auntie Cathy in Port Moresby at 4 am. I rang Roy's boss the Chief Pilot David of NationAir Helicopters at 5am and Captain David arraigned for 2 police to go with him by helicopter to Kaparoka and they departed at 7am. A twin cab truck took 3 other police to the village by road a distance of 100km.

As the helicopter touched down at Kaparoka the apprehended 2 rascols escaped in the excitement. The village police will locate these 2 and bring them back to Port Moresby.

Michael was reunited with Roy at 7pm the same day after Roy had motor sailed back to Port Moresby.

I helped get Roy a new anchor and chain and arraigned a diesel mechanic to fix Roy's engine and they departed once again for Lae at 9.30pm Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> 2008.

# \$10 BILGE ALARM

I have a brilliantly simple bilge alarm which I wish was my own invention. The blame for it rests with Dave Tassel of the yacht *Kia-Ora*, who was in Gove when I sailed out of there last July.

The alarm is cheap, has no moving components, is fool proof and not dependent on the boat's power system. It will operate even if the ship's power is totally compromised. It will wake the dead when it goes off it's nut. It is based on the 9volt domestic smoke detector available in all supermarkets and hardware stores for about 10 bucks.

Two core tinned wire is soldered onto either side of the push button test switch contacts inside the smoke detector. The two ends of this wire are simply spread apart about 50mm and suspended in the bilge. The rising water completes the circuit on the test switch, triggering the alarm.

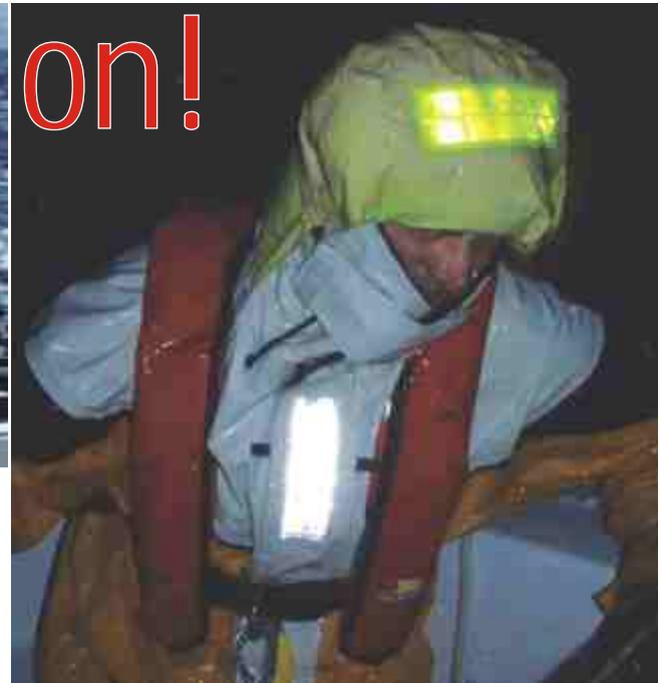
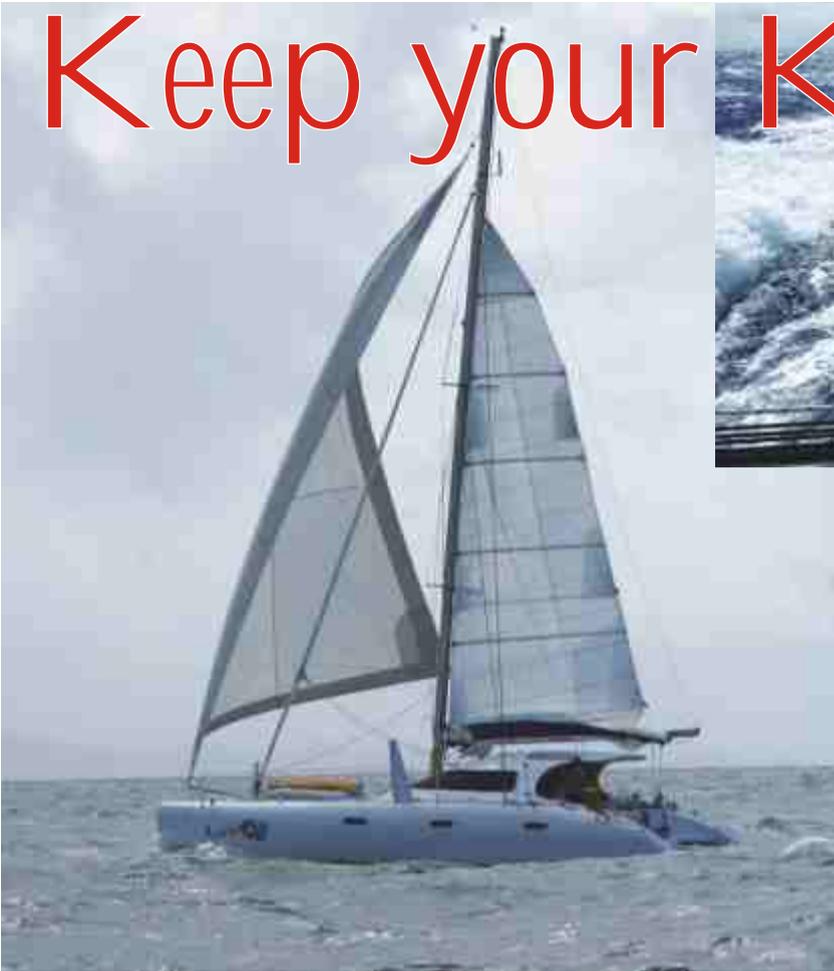
It pays to spray the bilge ends of the wire with Inox or WD40 so that the water is repelled and the alarm switches off when the water level falls below the sensor wire.

The bonus of this installation is that it still works as a smoke detector, and one can still test the battery using the test push button!! Obviously the 9v battery needs to be changed every 12 months as usual.

I'm sure many of the esteemed readers of TCP would have use for this budget addition to ship's safety. As I said blame Dave Tassel for this one.

Tony Beks, SV *Ragin Cajun*, Ao Chalong Bay, Ko Phuket,

# Keep your Knickers on!



## Aussie Oi, "The Sea", Jim trying to see, & Kerry below in full uniform...

That was when it all started...A little ruffle on the silky water. Oh great, I thought, it is *rather* warm; we could do with a bit of breeze. Might be enough to get the lure moving and catch another fish. The lure got moving all right, and so did we. Jim's head shot out of the hatch as 'Aussie Oi' took off. He leaped up and started zooming around, ripping down the screecher and furling out the jib.

"Come and give us a hand, we need to get reefed down!"

Oh he does make a *fuss*, thought I. "Hold on a minute, let me get these last bits in the pan." It wasn't long before pan and all were thrown into the sink as they were levitating from the stove.

"Grab the lifejackets!"

Lifejackets? But it's been such a *lovely* afternoon, why does this *nasty* wind have to spoil it? How very *inconvenient*, just at dinnertime too.

I shouldn't have spent time thinking about it. In less than an hour we were in a washing machine, with heaving lumps of water and frothy bits folding over at the top. A south-wester came in like a freight train. The sky had closed in and water was coming down from above and sideways off the waves. There were streaks of spume just like in the action movies, but I didn't feel like all this action just now. We had managed to get the wet weather jackets on but the sarong was stuck to my legs and stopping me from leaping around.

The wind was now consistently over 40 knots. Jim had whacked another reef in the main and dived into the cockpit with cries of "Reduce the jib! Winch it in! Get it in!"

I was huffing and puffing and on the verge of hyperventilating when the kids yelled "Maaaaaauum!" from the saloon (they had been clinging to the lounge like limpets, watching walls of water surge over the roof and off the back like a waterfall).

"Quiet kids" yelled Jim, "We've got to concentrate out here!" "But the **rope**, the **ROPE**, it's twisted!" they shouted.

They could see clearly the barber hauler we had on the jib clew (to haul it out in lighter winds) was wrapped round the jib sheet like an eel in shock on a fishing line. That explained everything. It wasn't just lack of vitamins in the winch wench, the 2 ropes were having an intimate relationship and were trying to get through the block together. Just at that moment, as yells went from Jim to Molly to me to Tom, there was one resounding one. "**I can't see!**"

The auto helm was under pressure and decided to trip out. Jim couldn't see any of the instruments through the horizontal walls of water. Lucky thing too as one of them had just registered 54 knots. Hell, what can we do? I just grabbed what happened to be there, Molly's swimming

goggles. They did the trick. Oh boy, wish that sea anchor wasn't under Tom's bunk, wish we were further away from that land mass on our starboard side, wish I didn't have to go up front and untangle that rope. AGH! Untangle the rope! Jim was hanging onto the helm for dear life, so I was it, Mrs. Foredeck. Leaping into action I scrambled and slithered over the deck trying not to get the lifeline wrapped around the sarong or the jib sheet around the jackstay or the barber hauler around the lifeline or my legs around any of it. To get to the eel-like mess of rope going into the block I had to get my leg up over the window and next to the jib track. The trouble was, there was water gushing everywhere with some force. I had to go for it if we were going to get the jib furled up. With one giant stride I lurched forwards. It was then that a thought came to me. Boy, I wish I'd put some knickers on this morning!

Kerry Alexander is a teacher, artist, wife and mother. She shared a dream with her husband Jim, to go cruising with their 2 children, Molly and Tom. Jim built their boat, 'Aussie Oi' in the back yard and now the family is enjoying the adventures of which they dreamed.



By Kerry Alexander, SY "Aussie Oi"

"Make sure you've always got clean undies, you never know when you'll get run over by a bus" That's what my mum used to say. It was instilled into me at an early age, that since we never know what's round the corner, if one has clean knickers, one is *prepared*. They need to be decent knickers too. Not washed out ones with bits of thread and elastic hangin' out.

So, what's all this got to do with sailing? Well, the problem is, we took off on a trip and didn't worry about the knickers. We weren't prepared, were we?

Oh no, thought we had it all worked out. Well, I'm afraid we stuffed up. We had been watching the weather, behaving like experts, logging on to the Internet at Neiafu, Tonga, and downloading anything with a wind arrow on it. Eavesdropping on conversations about fronts and squash zones and converging isobars. We knew Tonga to Fiji was *only* a 3-day trip. We had done 2 ocean crossings before. We had a *fast* Schionning 1320 Waterline cat. Piece of cake for us. 10 to 15 knots of S.E. breeze was forecast for 2 days and then it would be dropping out. 10 to 15 aft of the beam, what a *luxury*. We'd have the screecher out all the way. Would probably be there before anyone knew we'd gone.

We thought it would be a cruise. We didn't bother about hanking on the storm jib or lugging out all those bags of sea anchor stuff. To be honest, things did go pretty well for the first couple of days. It was a bit of a slow start but then we were soon skipping across the waves. We left before dark thinking the kids would sleep trough the night then it would only be 2 days for them. 2 days and 2 nights later, we were nearly there. The light was good and we came charging through the reefs to be at the bottom of Taveuni Island by nightfall on night 3.

The wind had dropped as predicted. Molly and Tom were happily reading, Jim was having a snooze, I was floating into the galley in my sarong to cook some of that lovely mahi-mahi we had caught earlier.

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# From Triad to a Knight!

Story & photos by Phil Webb *Editors note: In TCP 27 Phil told the story of losing his home of some 25 years to the cyclone and now he has moved on. You just can't keep a good sailor down!*

Following the disaster of the loss of S.V. TRIAD by cyclone Larry as issue 27 of TCP, the search has been on for a replacement multihull sailing vessel.

Another trimaran was out of the question due to the problems I had that insurance companies will not insure trimarans and ferro cement yachts. Note! TRIAD was NOT insured when wrecked by cyclone Larry. Some people now say insurance can be granted for production trimarans, but my eyes were looking out for a quick catamaran that would be a worthy replacement, though I knew that no catamaran would ever be able to point as high to windward as TRIAD.

I purchased numerous Trade a Boat magazines and browsed the internet, inspected a number of various catamarans all along the Queensland coast, until I seen this cat the owner named JEDI KNIGHT (previously in Townsville it was named MISTANHELM for those who know this catamaran yacht).

An Ashley Holliday design Pacific Seacraft, apparently known as a "THRUSTER". 11 metre length extended about 50cm when rudders were changed from kick ups, huge beam of 6.85 metre or 22ft 6inch, small bulb bows, very fine entry, 46 foot mast, I'm advised it has exceeded 22 knots under sail. Extremely lightweight boat, the cabin extension done in lightweight nidaplast so hasn't added much weight.

The first time I seen JEDI KNIGHT and went aboard with the owner I said this is the one, I will own this catamaran, particularly after he showed me his plans and drawings of the extended cabin he planned to build, as the cabin as it was then was really a "doghouse".

I advised the owner on that first inspection day this will be my catamaran, I'm sure then he thought I was just another "tyre kicker" as he had a lot of other lookers, time wasters.

I provided the owner a large deposit, money up front so he could commence the extension to the cabin and other improvements.

Originally the owner advised me MISTANHELM had NO toilet. When he purchased the cat in Townsville he installed an outside electric toilet, yes outside in the cockpit with a bit of curtain for a screen. The toilet, electric motor was also open to the elements, the owner said he just had this motor serviced. Now this just wouldn't do, especially if I had female guests aboard, so in the centre of the new cabin a bathroom was built with toilet over the centre pod which also held the new 9.9hp Yamaha outboard.

Taking on a large job such as this extension to the cabin took considerable time and more money than expected, though the owner did most of the work I did my bit (possibly getting in

his way at times) plus I purchased extra items, opening portlight hatches to let ventilation in, large winches I salvaged off TRIAD were also fitted.

Even after JEDI KNIGHT was relaunched there was still many jobs to complete, where the nearby Tweed Heads public pontoon was used as electricity was available there and the cat was regularly returned to the owner's mooring where further work continued.

It came to a stage where things were slowing down along with the owner's bank balance. Many intentions, such as providing me with a Sat Nav, an electric anchor winch and other items were just not going to happen, but at least the new side windows were fitted in the final days which lifted the appearance of the cat 100%.

I decided that any further work I would do myself, and that with the owner we would sail JEDI KNIGHT up from the Tweed to Southport/Broadwater area. Even in the last minutes before casting off about 7am the owner was still screwing on the front hatches that had late modifications done.

There was no wind as we motored out over the Tweed Bar at Point Danger and for near an hour motored our way north. Slowly the breeze came in from the north, right on the nose, so we would be pointing into the wind all the way to Southport Seaway, I thought this will not be the best sailing angle for a cat like this. This northerly wind freshened to 20+ knots northeast, but we only required one tack out then a straight course to the Seaway which by then the tide was ripping out, so it was an exciting ride over the bar with sails up and the engine running.

My first trip without the owner was up to Tipplers and some fishing near Jumpinpin. Anchored for the first time at night off Tipplers, eventually I had to use the loo. The pump would not suck up water, I added water from a bucket to the loo which then started pumping to the holding tank then it blew a fuse, somewhere? All lights also went out, sink pump also wouldn't work, I was left in the dark, so called it a night, off to bed early after turning on a portable battery light I had for an anchor light.

I found the errant fuse in the morning light, but have given up on the toilet. The owner may have had the pump repaired, but



"Jedi Knight"



Phil Smiling again and at the helm

the system didn't work for me.

At Whitworths Gold Coast store they had complete electric toilets on special for the price of a pump, so a new toilet and many fittings, 3 way valve, non return valve, hose and clips etc... were purchased which still all have to fitted, but working on it.

Whilst at Whitworths, on their counter was a current edition of TCP and more copies in a rack. With my face in the edition on show there it was their joke of the day! With myself becoming a well known customer at Whitworths as I have also been purchasing new fenders, the Sat Nav I wanted, and the list goes on.

## News From Bob Oram

# The Pearl Bay

By Bob Oram

Most cruisers who've spent time on the Queensland coast know of Pearl Bay. Its one of the prettiest spots on the coast and always a favourite stop off point on the way north or south. I thought it was a fitting design name for this boat.

This cruising power catamaran was commissioned by Dean and Yvonne Welch who have been friends of mine for about 25 years. They have had various sailing catamarans and a very fast 40' sailing trimaran. Dean has built each one ably assisted by Yvonne.

His preference for this boat was ply/epoxy construction after lots of experience using this method and others including Strip plank, Duflex flat panel, etc.

After all their sailing boats they decide their retirement boat would be power [like a lot of others].

Construction had to be straight forward, reasonably inexpensive, yet absorb the knocks and bumps from an everyday working boat which is what a 'real' cruising boat actually is.

Though the boat will spend a few months of each year in southern waters, its principal cruising grounds will be Queensland with perhaps a foray into the Territory to revisit areas they lived in, in a past life.

For these reasons the boat has around 700 miles range at 12 knots and around 1100 miles at 8 knots from 800 ltrs. of fuel.

Top speed [light ship] is about 17 knots. With the area available in the saloon we've agreed that it's just smart to use everyday household furniture as much as possible.

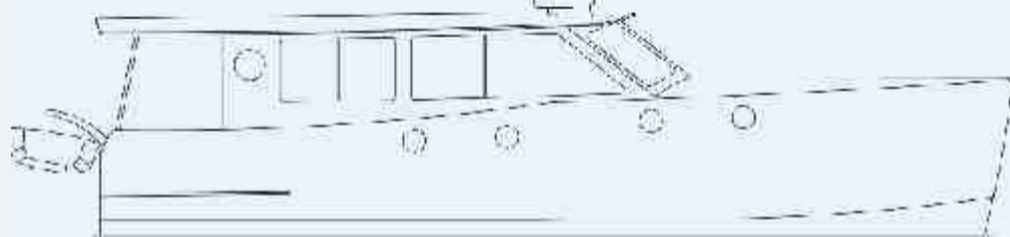
Refrigeration will be a top loading fridge/freezer, these seem to be the most efficient energy consumers.

Serious davits will take care of the ubiquitous 12' tinny with 15hp outboard for exploring/fishing etc. We'll incorporate a real duckboard/swimming ladder so entering and leaving the water in dive gear is straight forward and doesn't entail silly gymnastics.

The port side hull has a separate cabin forward with a king size bed that has excellent access all round.

### PEARL BAY 40'

40' Cruising power catamaran  
L.O.A 12.0 mts (39'4")  
BEAM 6.00 mts (19'8")  
DISP 7300 kgs (16060 lbs) (max)  
ENGINES 2X 80HP DIESEL  
WATER 600 LTS (130 GALS) + WATERMAKER  
FUEL 800 LTS (174 GALS)



Aft of this cabin is the ensuite which is big enough to include a small washing machine.

The starboard hull has a queen size cabin forward again with good access all round. Aft there is a dive-in double.

Upstairs, there is plenty of room so there can be flexibility in the layout.

Shown is what we've done for Dean and Yvonne, including a big galley.

The rest of the space is taken up with 4 big comfortable recliner chairs and that's about it.

The cockpit is 1.5 mts deep by 5.6 mts wide.

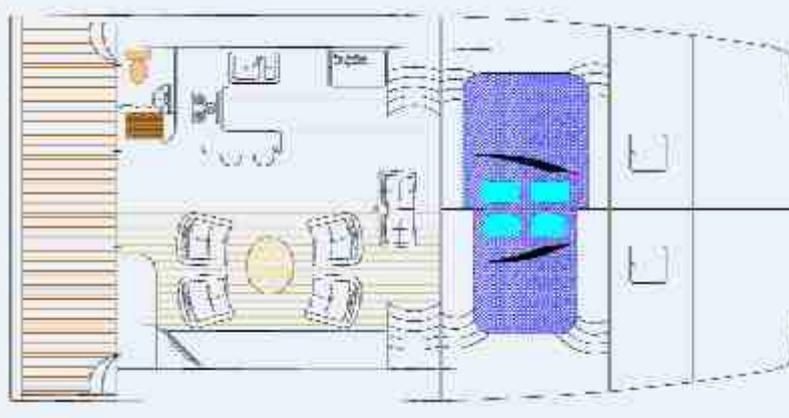
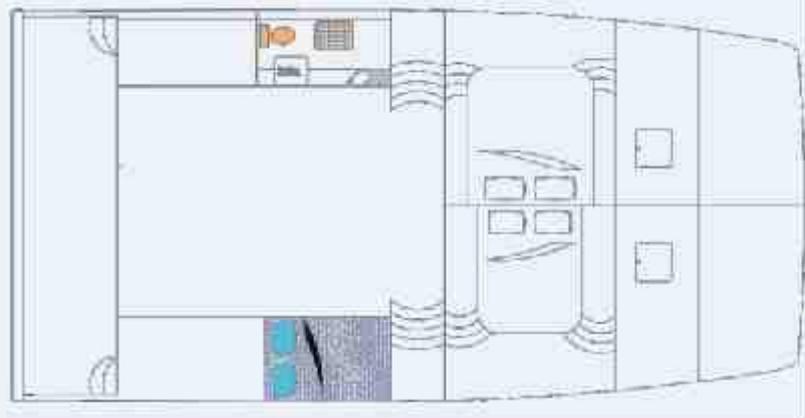
There is a toilet and shower up here for guests and everyday use.

Remembering the principal of keeping it simple and open, they decided not to have fixed cockpit seating, instead just using fold out chairs. I quite like this idea and am looking forward to seeing how it works in practice. Makes fighting fish easier that's for sure.

The boat will have started construction by the time this is released.

Dean hopes to be cruising for the 09 season. He teaches film and T.V. so if you want a video or movie made from a boat that will keep up with most fast sailing boats, knock on the hull.

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### Caution

When replacing through-mast bolts take care not to dislodge the compression sleeve inside the mast. It will be visible when you remove the nut and tang.

If t-balls are fitted instead of tangs, check the t-ball for cracks and that the receiving plate is sitting snugly against the inner mast wall. Black marks around the rivets here indicate movement, which could be serious.

From this position check the base of the spreaders for cracks and signs of movement. Move out to the spreader end and remove the spreader boot or covering tape. The cap or upper shrouds should be held to the spreader ends in some way. This could be a wire seizing, or a clamp welded to the end of the spreader arm. Undo the clamp and check for corrosion where the wire meets the aluminium. Apply Duralac paste if necessary and re-clamp the spreader end. Replace the boot or tape. If you have intermediate or diagonal shrouds terminating here, undo and check them as described in Part 1.

Often the lower spreaders are the site for a steaming or deck light. Glance at this but if it works leave it alone. If not now is the time to take it apart and find out why.

Climbing further up there may be a second set of spreaders to be dealt with in similar manner to the first. Somewhere between the lower and upper spreaders there may be a fitting for a spinnaker pole topping lift, and a tang for an inner forestay or babystay. Check these and lubricate any exit box associated with them.

At the top of the mast check the pins for the forestay and backstay, and the tangs and bolt for the cap shrouds. If you have a furler, check it is not wearing the wire of the forestay and its top cap, if any, is in place. By moving spare halyards over the sheaves you can see if they or their pins are worn. Alternatively poke the sheaves upward with a screwdriver. Movement here indicates a worn sheave hole or pin. Check the sheave pins are straight. If they're OK, lubricate with WD40. (I say WD40 because it comes in an aerosol can. Light machine oil is better but much harder to apply in this situation) Up here may be all sorts of antennas and lights. Again, I would suggest you leave them alone unless there is a known problem. Try reaching up to whatever lights you have there to find out if your bosun's chair allows this. Many of them leave you short, so you need to cinch yourself up higher on the safety line.

Now you've completed the work, relax and have a good look around before readying for the descent. You will have briefed your deck crew to lower you slowly and steadily. If they are new to this remind them to look up and watch how you're going.

Once safely back on deck you can be satisfied you know the condition of your rig and any problems it may have. Even if you need to call in a rigger at this stage you will appreciate their work and understand what they do to charge you so much for their services.

### One last thing

Now you've gone to the trouble of checking your rig, make a note in your log book. Then do it all again next year.

### Who is this Sheila? a.k.a. CONTRIBUTOR PROFILE

Petrea Heathwood is a yacht rigger and long term live-aboard cruising skipper. She has been involved with both cruising and racing since 1967, participating successfully in all major Australian ocean races. Petrea operated her own yacht rigging business in Brisbane before retiring to cruise full time. She has cruised the south west Pacific and circumnavigated Australia but prefers exploring the Queensland coast in her Norwalk Island Sharpie 31, Talisman. Petrea currently works as a freelance journalist and lives aboard at Mackay in central Queensland. In her spare time she explores the nearby Whitsunday Islands.



## A gallery of rigging do's and don'ts



Neat spreader-end clamp. Be sure to coat the aluminium with Duralac to discourage corrosion between dissimilar metals.



Aluminium swage sleeve, stainless steel thimble and what used to be galvanized wire. The thimble should be gal or solid cast aluminium to avoid galvanic corrosion of the wire.



Above: an example of halyard chafe. To right: If you must cover the rigging wire make sure the lower end of the cover doesn't trap moisture and debris.



Above: How to trap salt-laden moisture and dirt, promote corrosion and make your sails nice and dirty too!

Left upper: How did they fit all that stuff up there?

Left lower: "Barber's Pole" effect one or more strands have rusted so the wire should be replaced.

Below: Neat leather spreader tip boot.



Watch the birdie! Peewee will get a big surprise if this boat ever puts to sea.



How not to use a split pin! And the clevis pin is undersize for the hole in the toggle.

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# Dream Weaver in the Kimberley



Julie & Cameron



Water falls in rivers to the sea...

## Story & Photos by Julie and Cameron Pocknee, SY "Dream Weaver I"

By way of a quick recap, 'Dream Weaver 1', a 12m Roberts Spray, departed Mackay in July 2006 to tour the north Australian coastline. Following a stormy wet season spent in Darwin, we again threw off the berth ropes to cruise the famous and remote Kimberley coastline in early June this year.

The longest passage you have to make in the Kimberley region when departing Darwin is the first one, traversing the notorious Bonaparte Gulf from east to west. Many cruisers opt to cross the 250 nautical miles directly from Darwin to either the Berkeley or King George Rivers. We had plenty of time though and were intent on seeing as much coastline as possible, so tracked south down the NT's west coast before sailing (or more to the point motor/sailed as the forecast 15-20kt sou easter petered out to 5-10kts) the 90 miles to Lacrosse Island, at the base of the Bonaparte Gulf - wow, we're in the Kimberley!

Sheer sandstone cliffs which step up from the sea onto spinifex covered plateaus are everywhere in the Kimberley. They are a truly magnificent spectacle, and even more so where they form massive gorges around rivers like the King George and the Berkeley. These two rivers are the 'icon' rivers on the eastern Kimberley coastline and are not to be missed. Once over the shallow sandy entrance bars, these rivers provide sanctuary from the predominant winter sou easterlies. You can spend days if not weeks exploring these lengthy but narrow deepwater gorge systems where towering waterfalls discharge enormous volumes of freshwater for most of the year.

Freshwater is abundant in the Kimberley although many of the smaller creeks dry toward the end of the dry season. We were seldom more than a week between watering opportunities, which is more than can be said for other provisions. Unless you plan to have your champagne and caviar brought in by float plane, you need to budget and stock carefully before leaving.

We were prepared for a 5 month stay and cleared the Darwin supermarkets of many of their tinned goodies before departure. After about a month, you would kill for a tomato or any fresh greenery! On the other hand, fish and oysters are abundant once you get the hang of local conditions and we lost count of how many luckless mangrove jack disappeared via the galley. Fuel is available at a number of locations but come with long

pockets as it costs up to \$2.50/l for diesel and \$3/l for ULP, and they don't believe in credit cards or cheques. Our vote goes to the friendly gents at McGowans Island Beach (private camping park) in Napier Broome Bay where both diesel and ULP are available off the beach at a budget \$2/l.

The western coast of the Kimberley (a point to point stretch of about 250 miles) is deeply indented and provides some of the most spectacular and well protected anchorages you will find anywhere. Aboriginal art in caves and on protected rock faces is common, particularly wherever there is permanent water. A number of derelict settlements along the coast bear testament to just how remote and harsh this region was for those non indigenous who attempted to make it their home. Headstones and crumbling stone buildings say it all.

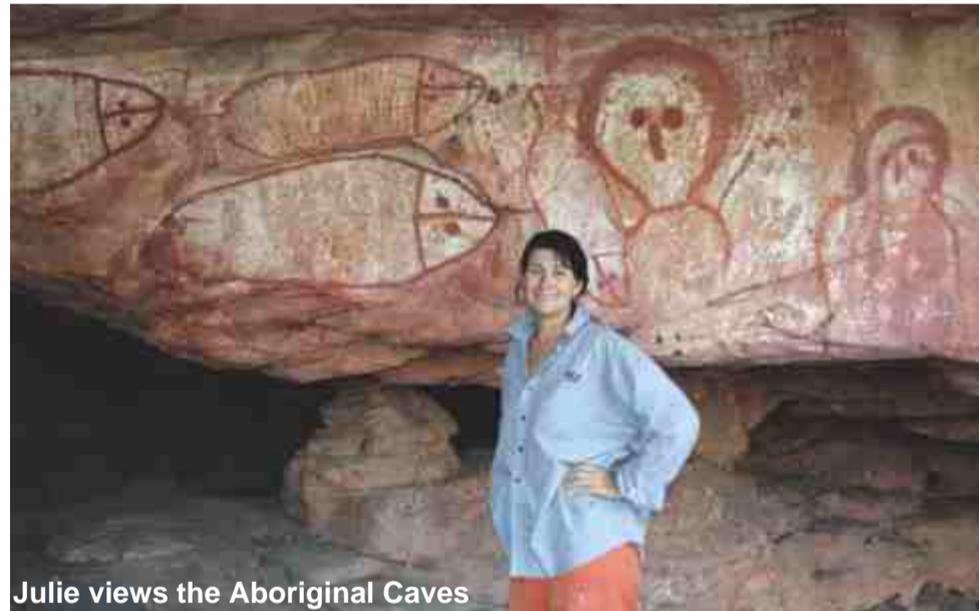
Sailing is an almost forgotten art once you round the top of WA and head south in the Kimberley (unless you stay well offshore, but where's the fun in that?). Generally light winds and difficult navigation through tortuous and often unsurveyed waterways with strings of pearl rafts thrown in for good measure means plenty of motoring. We logged a 50% sailing record, but many others are not as fortunate. The tides are huge in the southern Kimberley (both east and west coasts) with springs bringing a whopping 10m+ differential. Naturally, currents are likewise impressive in constricted channels like the entrance to the Prince Regent where we heard of boats being taken along at 14 knots - in neutral. Luckily we didn't encounter anything quite this furious although current did assist us in achieving up to 11.5knots under power - surely a record for a 'Spray' which is noted more for its performance at anchor than in the speed stakes?!

Whales are 'everywhere' on the western Kimberley coast, with the humpback season coinciding with the dry season. We watched speechless as a large bull came clear of the water within 100m of the boat before thundering back into the water in what we assume was a display of territorialism. I will never forget the immense size of the creature up close or the thought of whether the insurance premium had made it through ok in our absence!

Crocodiles are also prolific around coastal and estuarine parts and the smaller fellows are quite inquisitive, often coming right up to the boat for a closer inspection. Swimming and snorkeling in all salt water is unfortunately off the menu unless you fancy



A local!



Julie views the Aboriginal Caves

becoming the menu. Numerous freshwater holes well above the reach of the crocs do however provide welcome relief from the hot weather in this part of the world.

Aside from pearl farming, the other big businesses in Kimberley waters are tourism and gas. Numerous charter boats and helicopters take their well heeled clients to enjoy the delights of the Kimberley while the less obvious offshore gas wells are serviced by frequent helicopter relays to and from the mainland. Surprisingly, we saw only a handful of private vessels, many of whom we spent time with. It was always a treat to meet likeminded others and swap stories over a drink while watching the sun sinking into the Indian Ocean.

After about 2½ months, we turned back for Darwin via Wyndham, a journey of about

1000 nautical miles. If we hadn't seen everything 'in the book' on the way down, we made efforts to see it on the way back. A highlight was an overnight stop at Montgomery Reef where we were lucky enough to have spring tides and calm weather. The 9m ebbing tide created spectacular waterfalls over the edge of the reef and provided some entertaining 'white water rafting' in our tinny through the deep channels incised into the reef.

Safely back in Darwin, we're now left to contemplate the next adventure. South East Asia features high on the list, but first we'll see out the cyclone season in air-conditioned marina comfort and go through the normal off-season maintenance routine. Perhaps go see that big rock in the centre of Australia!

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# Sundowners

here's my story, mate...



## The Reef

By Capt'm Oddworm, SY "Mariposa"

"Oh Crap..., I don't know! It seems like he's wrong at least half the time!" "Reef, Reef, yea Reef..." she cheered like a football fan. "Go Reef go! Go Reef go!" "There's a lot to consider." I hedged. But she insisted. "There's nothing to consider. We're here now and this might be our last chance. Reef, Reef, yea Reef!"

We were holed-up in an insecure anchorage off an exposed finger of rock protruding from the shores of eastern Queensland. The weather man had been predicting south-east winds of fifteen to twenty knots for days now but all we were getting was five from the north.

Under a cloudless robin's egg sky the sea shot hot white glints off her rippled surface. It seemed the perfect opportunity to do some exploring along the Great Barrier Reef. The only drawback being that the reef lay some forty miles to our east. To get there would require an entire day of very slow sailing.

The area of reef under consideration was poorly surveyed and carried warnings about "uncharted obstacles" and "boulder studded" lagoons. We would need to pick our way into one of these lagoons to find a deep-water anchorage close in against the coral walls and bombies. That wouldn't present a problem if the weather held; but what if it didn't? If the wind kicked-up and clouded the water while we were on the inside, we'd have little chance finding our way out.

"Of course you realize that if we sail out there we are, in essence, betting that the forecast is completely wrong", I said. "Great - Barrier - Reef," she chanted, thrusting her arms about as if holding pom-poms. "G-B-R, G-B-R, Yea, Yea, G-B-R!" "Okay," I offered, "lets do this. We'll get ready and if nothing changes during the

night, we'll weigh anchor at first light." "YEA! G-B-R, G-B-R!"

Evening comes on swiftly in the tropics. One moment the sun is high, white hot and bleaching color from the hills and sky. The next moment it is sliding westward, shimmering orange as it falls. The air turns cool. Sitting atop *Mariposa's* "dog house", we watched in silence as the molten orb blushed magenta and slipped behind the distant hills. From the north, gentle zephyrs played across the water and the night settled in; soft, peaceful, calm.

The alarm clock went off at 0400 hours. We awoke in anxious anticipation of the adventure ahead. I put on coffee and readied the gear while Sandra stowed things away below decks. We got underway as planned and were sliding along nicely on the early morning breeze when the weather up-date came in on the VHF radio. Now the guy was calling for fifteen to twenty knots from the north-east.

"Well..., here we go again. The barometer hasn't moved in days, the sky is clear, and every six or twelve hours this guy changes his tune." I said.

"So lets just keep on, and see what happens" she said with a shrug. "D'you want to catch a fish?" "Sure. Why not?" I agreed.

I rolled out a hand line with a bright-eyed rubber squid and immediately snagged a fair sized mackerel. Temperatures soared as the sun reached his noontime zenith but the breeze remained unchanged, and Ol' Bright-eyes continued to catch. We landed two more fish before deciding to give it up. By then we were close to the reef.

Finding our way through the maze of coral was easy in the gin-clear water. I perched on the bow pulpit, pointing out coral-heads, while Sandra stood at the wheel. We followed a broad path of rich

blue water until we were well inside the lagoon. Then I had her nose *Mariposa* up into a shallow spot, but it proved too tight for anchoring. We tried passing close to several coral banks in hopes of dropping the hook on their slopes but there were no slopes. The coral grew straight up in a wall from eighty feet below. Around and around we went to no avail. With the sun and the tide on their way down it began to appear that we might have made a mistake in coming here. Finally, incensed and desperate, I had Sandra wiggle *Mariposa* into a tight little hole where our depth sounder recorded sixty feet. I didn't like it but, in the failing light, I was running out of ideas.

So I dropped the hook, played out all the chain we carried, and checked our position. Despite the fact that we were seriously short scoped, everything looked good. It appeared that we would swing clear of the surrounding coral heads, providing the wind didn't come up strong in the night or blow from the south.

On this uneasy footing the waning October moon found us; and what do you supposed happened? Well, it seemed that that SOB of a weather man finally got it right.

The wind piped up from the north-east. A slight chop was already coming over the reef at low tide and with the rising water it would only get worse. Sandra, nervously sensing my own discomfort asked, "Did you feel the anchor grab when you set it?" "Not really." I murmured. "At this depth..., well..., it's hard to tell. I think we snagged something but... Who knows?" I would like to have reassured her but then again, why lie?

In anticipation of standing anchor watch all night, I decided to take a short nap. But sleep was impossible. By 2200 hours *Mariposa* was pitching wildly and her rigging was wailing a mournful song. It was all getting too spooky and way too stressful. I decided to have a look around. Spot-light in hand, I went up on deck in cave-like blackness; then I hit the switch.

Huge, brilliantly coloured coral heads reached up for me on all sides. *Mariposa's* stern hung over a bright lethal ball of red and gold. With one good crack we could kiss our rudder good-bye. And the worst of it was that there was nothing I could do. Normally, I'd fire-up the engine and stand by against a drag, but here, close in, with absolutely no reference points, the action would be futile. So I said my prayers and cursed myself for being so stupid. I mean, maybe I could have found a better anchorage. Maybe I could have - should have - spent a little more time searching. Maybe I ....

So there it was. Either the anchor would hold us off or I'd be calling May Day. And then what? I put the thought out of my mind and counted the hours 'till dawn.

With our over-sized ground tackle and the grace of God, I watched the eastern horizon emerge from the blackness. It seemed to take an eternity. As the haze of dawn turned from gray to blue, the wind abated and I went below. Sandra had slept the night through, contently believing I had the situation under control. Now, I was tired. But there was still work to be done so I brewed a pot of coffee. We had come to free dive this reef, and if the weather was willing to cooperate, dive it we would.

As the thick aroma from our percolator filled the cabin, Sandra roused herself and slipped off to the head. I slumped gloomily in the cockpit. Sure, I wanted to explore the reef but getting ready seemed like a lot of work. Firstly, we'd need to get the dinghy off the deck and over the side. Then mount the out-board and load in fuel, oars, bailer, tools, and water. And then, of course, there is all the snorkelling stuff: wet suits, weight belts, masks, snorkels, flippers, booties, gloves, goodie bags, and a pole spear.

Did I forget to mention the anchor? That's exactly what happens when I'm over tired. I neglect the obvious. If all that weren't enough, after two or three hours in the water, we would have to bring everything back on board *Mariposa* and get under-way, before the afternoon sun made a blinding mirror of our westward escape rout. It all seemed a bit much.

As I numbly gazed down the companion way, Sandra poured up two steaming mugs and joined me in the cockpit. I can only suppose I was looking as bad as I felt because the first words out of her mouth were, "We don't have to do this if you don't want to."

"No! I want to!" I lied. "I just need to sit right now. I'll be fine in a minute."

I tend to say absurdly confident nonsense when I doubt my strength or ability. It's probably some kind of hang-over from my military training; we were taught to roar sycophantic crab like "More P.T. Drill Sergeant!! More P.T.!!" just moments before total collapse.

So we just sat there and drank our coffee. And half way through my second cup a funny thing happened. I felt an irresistible urge to get in the water. Maybe it was because the wind had failed entirely and the clear, glassy sea called to me; or maybe it was the way the morning sun was pushing deep into the forbidden and secretive world beneath our keel. Then again, it may have simply been the whacker dose of caffeine and sugar I had frantically sucked down. No mater; I was stoked.

"I'll bet we could have this dinghy overboard and loaded in fifteen minutes if we wanted!" I said, stretching out a kink in my back.

"More like thirty. But hay..., I'm ready if you are."

Continued next page...

## We've got a site to sea!

Take an online tour of *Good Old Boat* magazine. We're the U.S. sailing magazine for real folks with real boats: affordable boats, experienced boats . . . quite frankly, boats like yours (and ours). Our magazine's about fixing them up, making modifications, upgrading equipment, and (as often as we can anyway) going sailing.

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So we had at it and, sure enough, we were ready to go in record time. Our lagoon was enclosed by a flat topped ring of coral about seven miles long and nearly as wide, but you would need to view it from the air to appreciate this aspect. From our prospective, along the southern wall, it appeared as a golden band of submerged rock vanishing into infinity in both directions; like a great barricade thrown up against the endless expanse of blue. Motoring over in the dinghy, we chose a sandy area in the shallows atop this fortification and tossed in the anchor. Then we suited up and took the plunge. They say that "a picture is worth a thousand words." If this is true than it must also be admitted that an experience is worth a thousand pictures. What I'm getting at is this: no matter how I approach it, I can not adequately describe the reef. I have used the words like "wall" and "fortification", when in reality it is a vertical Swiss Cheese; a three dimensional maze; a mass of interconnected caves and tunnels and ducts. And, it is all very much alive! The entire structure is built of living creatures glued to the backs of their deceased ancestors. Un-tolled billions of micro critters cling together, layer upon layer, ever amassing themselves since the very dawn of life. And to this organic mountain come the new kids on the block. Species with a mere twenty five or thirty million years in their lineage profusely attach themselves to their ancient brethren. There are starfish and crabs and nudibranchs and bizarre alien creatures, beautiful and horrible, and colourful beyond dreams; beyond fantasies. Clusters of fire bright fish flush through endless corridors to the pulse of the ever-present swell. And here and there, something large and ominous is seen. There is an eye, a fin, a toothy maw; seemingly too large to be concealed in this

living soup. Yes; there he is. From an impossibly tight crevasse a colossal grouper emerges to lazily inspect the interloper. He glides through a broad arch around me to disappear down another canyon. In the shaded depths of a living tunnel I spot a crayfish. Then, turning away to seaward, I see a long row of reef squid hanging curtain-like in the surge. Grabbing a breath at the surface, I pause and search the dark blue water beyond the reef's golden edge. Australia is famous for its sharks. There are several small white tips circling about with curiosity. Annoyed, I charge them in hopes of driving them away. It never seems to work but it keeps them cautious; or at least I hope it does. Then I breathe again and turn back to the reef. And so it goes; the endless play; the dance.

As the hours pass I begin to catch a chill but I don't want to quit. I know that Sandra has returned to the dingy and is now basking in the warmth of the mid-morning sun. But I stay at it until I'm shaking. Eventually I surrender and swim back. I board the dinghy and I shuck my wet suit. The sun is blazing white in a clear blue sky but the breeze is fresh, stronger than when we began. Sandra sprawls across the starboard tube, lips smeared white with zinc-oxide, her boating "shades" crusted with salt. Like a reclining aquatic Buda she purrs. "Let's stay." The sun; the sky; the reef; the sweet seductive water called to me; spoke to me; sang to my very soul. The sublime moment reached out to hold me; but like a rejected lover it melted before my hardened heart. The wind was up and I knew worse was coming. It was time to go. All I said was "No."

There were no other words exchanged. Sandra had resigned herself to the reality of our situation before I had spoken. What she uttered had been a prayer of gratitude rather than a statement of desire. We motored back to Mariposa in silence. Now we needed to ship our dinghy, stow our gear, and seek the safety of deep water before the afternoon glare turned our escape rout into a billion shimmering mirrors. Our exit was uneventful.

The afternoon passed. To the west, the setting sun was lost in haze. A thick darkness swallowed us. Slowly, stars began to emerge; a billion soft sparks defining the black dome of night.

Lights of a distant city loomed beyond the ragged coastal hills as exhaustion crept up behind me. All of a sudden I felt lightheaded and weak, so I call down to the galley where Sandra was preparing dinner. "Hey Babe. Can you take over for a while? I need to crash!" "Do you want a cup of coffee?" "No. I..., ah..., I really need to lay down." Laying in my bunk I slowly replayed the day's events; my night of anxiety, the exquisite perfection of the reef, my beautiful wife still awake and sailing Mariposa through the night. With heartfelt gratitude I thanked my God for his bounty, and fell asleep.



*Capt'n Oddworm & first mate Sandra*

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## Alan Lucas - Big Boat Bungles continues...

I suspect the authority was aware of the situation but may have feared insulting the super-yacht clique. I base this opinion on its unabashed enthusiasm to attract super yachts and their fat wallets to Queensland during the run up to the 2000 Sydney Olympics. During that period an officer from the Transport Department, Marine Division, drove 500 kilometres just to seek my input, blissfully unaware, apparently, of my monumental disinterest in the subject. The best I could do was to warn against over investment in what was then seen as a short-term gain (just to supply shore power to super-yachts can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars in electrical infrastructure).

So is it possible that anything big super-yacht or rust-bucket, was welcome? Was the authority salivating over everything and anything large to insure against insulting a big spender? I have no proof one way or the other, but I do know that the same authority shamefully turned a blind eye to a very serious, near fatal incident involving a ship, as the following story validates.

With friends and dozens of onlookers, my wife and I witnessed and photographed a near disaster caused by the serious mishandling of one of these 'recreational' ships in the immediate pre-Olympic Games period. Despite the incident being reported to Queensland Transport (in accordance with its own strict law), there was never an inquiry nor, indeed, did the authority bother acknowledging the report.

It happened many miles up a river where a vessel measuring 48 metres long and displacing around 350-tons had changed ownership for the umpteenth time. The latest owner wanted to 'drive' his acquisition down the river: but the trouble was she was pointing *upriver* and was much too big to turn under her own power, especially as she was boxed in by small-craft moorings. Offers from experienced boat-handlers to warp her around on the berth before starting the engine were ignored in favour of the owner 'having a go' under her own steam. And so lines were thrown off and the impossible task of driving her off the berth like a car, then 'U' turning in a very confined space, began.

Sensing disaster as she left her berth, a visiting trawler offered to pull her bow around before she got loose amongst the moored craft. By then the ship's

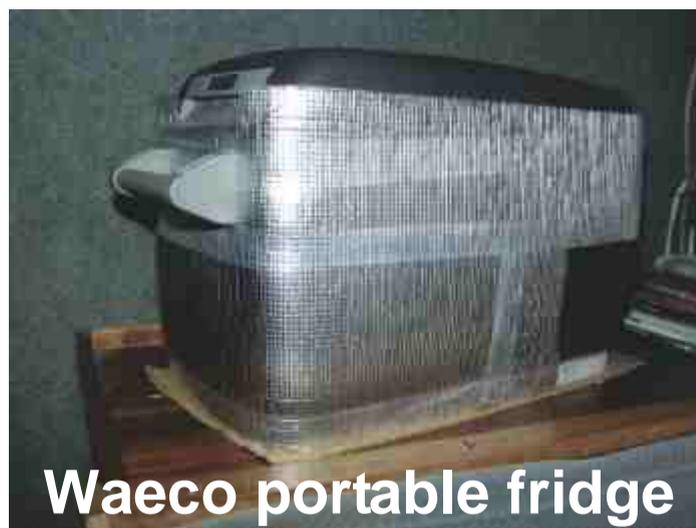
owner was so rattled by imminent disaster that he eagerly agreed, allowing the trawler to turn and align his ship for her downriver run. When this was achieved, the fool then started his direct-drive engine before the trawler could release the towrope and get clear. As a result, the trawler was overtaken and pulled over by the ship, then, to the shock and horror of disbelieving onlookers, she was rolled underwater. She went so far over that her wheelhouse completely disappeared beneath the river with the owner trapped inside (his deckhand leaped clear).

This was no minor incident. The trawler was around 16-metres long with two decks above her main and the river was too muddy to see anything beneath the surface. Watching from the shore at the time, we could do nothing but pray for the poor fellow's survival, which by now seemed very unlikely. Then, as a couple of tinnies rushed out to assist, a miracle happened: the trawler's wheelhouse sluggishly reappeared above the surface as she reluctantly righted herself. Then, to our intense relief, the owner was still alive and functioning behind the wheelhouse windows, which, fortuitously, were all shut tight, thereby producing enough last-minute buoyancy to right the trawler.

Shamefully, the ship made little attempt to honour any International Rule of standing by and rendering assistance: she just took off down river. Marine incidents don't get much worse than this one: Here was a ship that should not have been allowed to move in the first place; a skipper who had no ship-handling skills; a large trawler being rolled over and nearly sunk; two lives nearly lost and a vessel failing to render assistance. As stated, an incident report was filed yet now, ten years later, a response is still awaited.

This story is not anecdotal. It happened. There were plenty of witnesses and a photograph of the incident appeared in my 'Modern Boating' column of January 2000, so why the deafening silence from QMS? It is a sad feature of authoritarian organizations that their nature inevitably militates against the possibility of learning from experience. When caught asleep at the wheel, they find it much easier to go into deep cover before retaliating by penalising the very people who had nothing whatsoever to do with the problem.

## Product Evaluation



Waeco portable fridge

I bought it because we wanted a little extra capacity for drinks on board and because it was cheap! \$599 at Super Cheap auto Supply. I found that the machine ran quiet and pulled down temperature fast. The only problem was that, being a portable car unit, the insulation was not up to my miserly standards. A trip to Clark Foam and \$20 worth of engine room insulation (the shiny stuff and leaving plenty of room for air vents) and some styrene for the bottom, all held together with packing tape, and the efficiency increased handsomely. That was three years ago. Not long ago we started having some problems with it. One issue was a voltage drop in the cord. I found a fuse in the plug and cleaned the contacts with a pencil rubber. That cured one problem but it was still working harder than it should have. The fridge was turned into a local Waeco repair agent that treated us poorly. After trying to sell me a new cord that was obviously not the problem and I refused, the fault turned out to be dust on the coils. Hard to notice through the plastic grill. He charged \$80 to dust it. Nice guy! As it was turned in for warrantee service, I complained to the main office on the Gold Coast. National service manager, Danny Newman, stood by me, picked up the tab and gave me his personal guarantee that the fridge must satisfy regardless of the eminent demise of the 3 year warrantee.

I have found the product very good, well priced and most important, the back up from Waeco beyond reproach. Our new boat will have a Waeco main fridge. I recommend this product.

**Cheers & (cold) beers,  
Bob**

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# Romance of the Sea

HE SAID: SHE SAID

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then away from leeward side

She'd say come! I'll safely take you  
no trouble to am I put  
when you dare to hoist these sails  
and my decks you underfoot

I may roll the gunn'ls under  
But that's with mirth and glee  
With that bone in mouth I clear  
Away, and far to sea

Tho some nites be as black as pitch  
And the sea go grumbling by  
All be well, end of dog watch bell  
When daylight breaks our sky

Then do this now, my hearty  
Use me for what I am built  
To sail above the oceans floor  
And free of any guilt

So come then hoist away  
Before the land is lost  
And put my lee rail under  
Then, measure up that cost!

©Lance, SY Galadriel

## Anchors away! CQR

At Orpheus, I thought, I'd lost my muse  
until inspiration came,  
with that damned Bruce,  
ploughing a furrow  
across the coral.

Then,  
through the dark  
and rainy night,  
help was at hand  
by Windsong's light.

This time,  
I thought,  
we'll not travel far.  
I'll put my faith  
in CQR.

©Frank Stoove  
SY, "Escondido"

## "Our Anchor"

They don't really cost much you know  
in the overall scheme of things  
We seldom give 'em a second thought  
even when the boat does swing

We go ashore or even to sleep  
ever trusting in its working  
Full of confidence in our anchor  
to stop our yacht from jerking

It can come up black and muddy  
or in coral have a big hold  
But no matter what the situation  
On our anchor we are sold.

©Paul Lambert, SY "Ripples"  
"The Ripples Rhymer"

Come run away with me HE SAID, we'll follow the sun  
Escape the winter down south, it'll be so much fun.  
Adventure, excitement, so much to explore,  
Romance and sunsets on a faraway shore.  
An exotic life away up there,  
no more housework, no more worries, not a care.  
Pack up the house HE SAID, load up the boat  
Lets hit the road, you won't need that coat!

Joining the "grey nomads", trailer-sailer behind,  
Weathers looking better, HUGHIE is so kind.  
Camping out there under a gum tree  
By riverbed or beach, its all for free.  
What better life could you have? SAID HE,  
Campfire at night, people and tall tales galore  
But its time to head for that distant shore.

We launch the boat, supplies aboard,  
Must go with the tide, OH MY GAWD!  
Just a learning curve, a challenge, SAID HE,  
the vast Kimberly calls as we head out to sea.  
Hundreds of islands, fine sandy beaches,  
Mountain tops with rocky features,  
Rivers and waterfalls and starlight nights,  
Dugongs and turtles, sea eagles in flight.  
Its paradise here; of course, with a beer!

A man couldn't want for more SAID HE,  
Yes you could SAID SHE. SAIS SHE:  
More comfort than a bucket for a pee,  
less rocking and rolling upon the sea.  
Less flies and mossies and midges would do,  
more water for showers, to name just a few.  
Less mud and mangroves when going ashore,  
SAID SHE: fridge space, I need much more  
The foods going rotten, I've just hit rock bottom:  
That long ocean passage, I've had enough  
I want to get off, its far too rough.

Trust me SAID HE, just ten minutes more  
Bullshit SAID SHE. Its hours or four  
Before we shelter on a lee shore.

I may grizzle and groan SAID SHE, SAID SHE,  
But I wouldn't change any of it, and nor would HE.  
We have our moments both bad and good  
But we'd live this life forever if we could.

Flo, "Erflo II"



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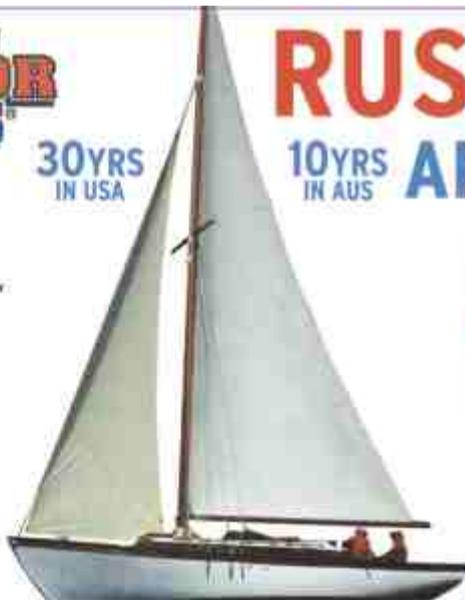
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# Third World Dentistry



Dragon boating on Hai Long Bay, bkie gangs and waterfalls. So much to interest. At Right: "The poor young woman who rowed seven large white people three miles up the river to get to the Perfume Pagodas and back in 40 degree heat."

Editors note: I wish TCP had had ten pages or so for the photos that accompanied this article. A priority will be given to publishing this article to the web site to allow the full gallery... magnificent!



Story & photos by Vicki J, SY "Shomi"

**I'd become a lapsed Christian, I confess.** I hadn't prayed except for the occasional plea of 'Oh God' when faced with a rather heavy challenge or to exhort 'Christ Almighty' when the challenge didn't quite pan out as planned. Praying, out loud, in public had not been my forte since leaving the cloistered bosom of the Jehovah's witnesses into which it was my dubious destiny to be born. Hanoi in Vietnam however restored a desperate hope in a higher power or rather the traffic in Hanoi inspired me to pray. Avidly! Some of the travellers I met had braved the streets of India, China, and Bangkok and survived but faced with Hanoi's insane drivers, who'd grown up dodging a virtual rain of bombs,

stayed in the safety of their Guesthouses. I witnessed an accident a day while in Vietnam.

I'd come here to have my teeth fixed after hearing that the local dentists had been trained in USA and where I didn't have to sell my boat to pay for the dentistry. After the fiasco of being deported back to Bangkok due to a misunderstanding about a missing visa I was back in Hanoi. Seeing Hai Long Bay had been a 14 year dream and first on the agenda. On the eve of my journey I ate something which decided to declare civil war on my intestines. It felt as if bombs and grenades were being detonated inside of me. Not a good thing when travelling in a mini bus with no toilet.

There was only one thing for it. I had to give up eating. Sightseeing, on foot, or canoe in 42 degree sweltering heat, became one of those 'Oh God' experiences with a few 'Holy Crap' moments threatening. 'Christ Almighty' being reserved for some of the toilets in Vietnam. When I could find one. They are not plentiful which left me wondering how the locals managed. Although I did spot more than one local topping up the lake which forms the heart of Hanoi's French quarter.

How they connived to stay alive when the footpaths are used as garages and one has to step out onto the road to walk was another mystery. It was while I was walking on a stretch of footpath that was not littered with motorbikes or their innards strewn about

like a bomb victim, a motorbike mounted the footpath ahead and without reducing speed, in fact accelerating, barrelled toward me. As I jumped out of its way I saw a devilish grin beneath the black helmet of the rider.

There and then I quit praying. I flew to Laos the next day.

This is how I came to have my dentistry done in a third world country. Last year in a stop over to Denmark we had ventured north to explore Laos and were as impressed as the travellers who'd recommended it. The nature of the Laos people is calm and polite. Generally they are humble and honest and even though for centuries they have been caught in all the wars of the neighbouring countries of Vietnam, Siam, China, and Thailand and are fierce enemies, they also make lovely friends, with big welcoming, white, healthy smiles. They had survived their dentists so why couldn't I. Plus the capital Vientiane is little more than a series of villages that begin on the Mekong River and fan out.

Steffen and I had been befriended by a family we met and I returned to meet up with Khempet and his wife and daughter and was introduced to their dentist who had his own dental clinic. He and his wife MeeMee operated it after their day job finished. He works in the state run hospital teaching, studying and practising dentistry and his wife, also a public servant, is a doctor.

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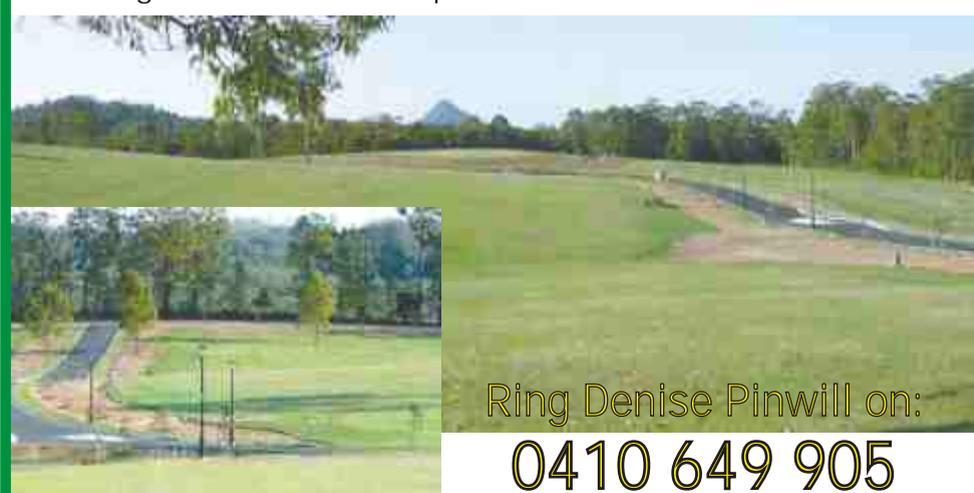
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Khempet had drawn a mud map in broken English but as I wandered the streets for two hours harassing toot toot drivers to decipher the directions, I found they all spoke English exactly as I had said it, but understood nothing. I happened upon an English language college and enlisted the help of 2 teenage girls talking on their mobiles. They instructed the driver and I was there in 2 minutes.

The clinic was in the family home. There his 3 strapping young sons were shoed from the computer which was in the clinic and adjacent to the spotless, ornate dining room. I was made to feel like a welcome guest and Mee Mee who spoke much better English than her husband, which was precious little, that I could make out, checked out my vitals and declared me very strong. This I found quite daunting and almost bolted from the clinic in my bib. It was back to my old standby of 'Oh God'. Through the good communication skills of Mee Mee, using gestures and an occasional English word, I gleaned what work would be done. For the next 3 hours the dentist slaved away with an intensity I have rarely seen in Western dentist. My jaw was a little unhinged by the experience but the rest was painless.

Another 4 evenings I visited but for only short spaces of time as my new bridges were measured and temporary ones fitted, a root canal filed out and capped. Then I was free for the next 10 days to proceed into the interior of Laos. I was determined to see the old capital, the world heritage town of Luang Prabang about which I had heard

so much. The road up there is a marvel of ingenuity. Perched as it is, on the edge of the 'Swiss alps of Laos', the hairpin bends and narrow unfenced cliffhanging climb is death defying especially when our mini bus driver decided to overtake a bus on one of those hairpin bends. The Russian backpackers aboard declared it 'Russian Roulette' but with Hanoi under my belt I felt impervious. In fact blessed.

John Sword of the Courier Mail sums it up well, when describing the dawn scene at Luang Prabang, "The murmur is hushed as the monks approach---- hundreds of them in single file, a rippling ribbon of orange curling though the morning streets." They are carrying a bowl. It is filled each day with rice and tid bits by the relatives. It is said every family has a boy in one of the temples.

There is so much chanting and quiet meditation from the 17 intact Buddhists temples that have seen the Kings of over a thousand years, almost everyone who visits sits around with beatific smiles, incapable of becoming even slightly disturbed by the 'hurry up and wait' motto that is Laos blossoming tourist trade.

Not to be missed, yet not on the tourist beat was the 7 headed 10 horned dragon-headed hand carved Royal Barge. By exploring the oldest Temple grounds I discovered the barge covered in dust in an outbuilding.

One hour outside of town is the surreal Kouang Si waterfall. It is a powder blue series of lagoons as the falls drop down the mountain slope and disappear into the jungle. The water is cooler than the Beerlao they serve throughout the country. At the base is a sanctuary where a rescued tiger and several black bears are housed.

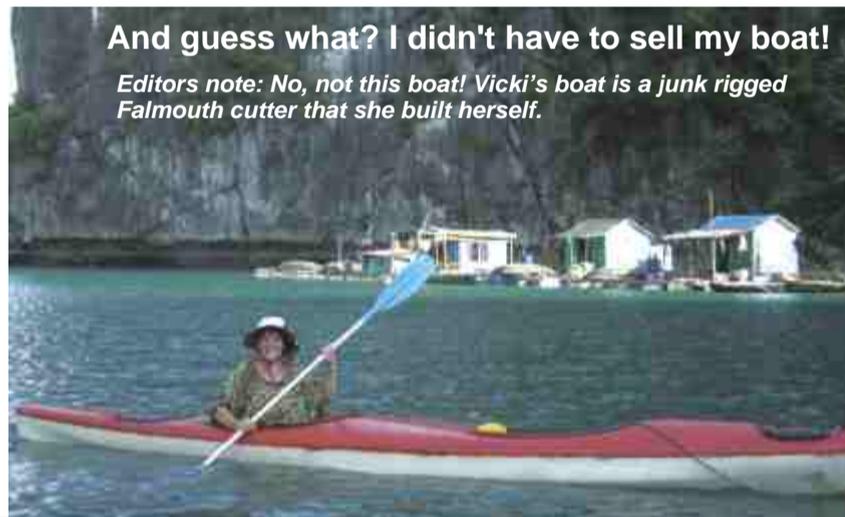
The trip down the ranges to a village called Veng Vieng usually takes 5 hours. With a mini bus whose clutch kept heating up it took 8. Half the passengers had to be taken by another bus and those remaining in the original vehicle feared any moment a total gear failure. We spent the next 8 hours crawling down the mountain. Much to my dismay. Even my water diet hadn't put much of a dent in my toileting dilemma. In stewing

heat I arrived in Veng Vieng minus one shoe which had disappeared from the guesthouse steps where shoes must be left. I looked a sight hobbling on hot stones through the town with my backpack and desperately trying to hold my insides from exploding at such an in opportunistic time.

Veng Vieng is situated on the Nam Xing river and is at the base of limestone mountains that rise up from the rice paddies in breathtaking splendour. These mountains are full of caves, some of which have become temples. In the lonely planet guide it is stated that tubing down the Nam (Song) Xong is a right of passage. Tourists from across the globe hire an old truck tube and are taken by a seriously overloaded toot toot upstream where one encounters, on the journey, around 15 huts overhanging the river with jumps and a Beerlao for a \$1. It is the equivalent to 2 stubbies.

Other interesting things appear on the menu. Happy shakes, opium shakes as well as mushroom shakes take the place of our more staid Oz flavours such as strawberry, chocolate and caramel. Even without the BeerLao or shakes it feels like tripping to be twirling down the Nam Xong and navigating the gentle rapids while gazing up at the stupendous mountains rising into the heavens.

Back in Vientiane I met up with Steffen on his way back from Denmark. The industrious dentist fitted my new bridges and a crown in minutes and the total cost, including the work done in Bangkok came to 1,500.OZ dollars. Steffen's two partial plates cost him \$150. Including the holiday, I had \$20,000 change from what it would have cost for my work at home.



And guess what? I didn't have to sell my boat!

Editors note: No, not this boat! Vicki's boat is a junk rigged Falmouth cutter that she built herself.

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# Some Cruisers & Racers events for 2008

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PRESENTS  
28th Annual  
**Bay to Bay**  
TRAILABLE YACHT RACE  
**2008**



The Hervey Bay Sailing Club invites entries from eligible Trailable Yachts for the Annual Bay to Bay Trailable Yacht race to be sailed on the waters of the Great Sandy Strait between the mainland and Fraser Island.

The Bay to Bay is a category 5 event with limited rescue availability approximately 90km long, sailed over two legs with an overnight stop at Garry's Anchorage on Fraser Island

## QUEENSLAND LABOUR DAY LONG WEEKEND

### SATURDAY 3rd & SUNDAY 4th MAY 2008

General entry & bus enquiries: Irene (07) 4124 4840 email francisim@optusnet.com.au  
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## DARWIN AMBON YACHT

### RACE- 2007 a blast!

See you in 2008!

Entries in the now world famous blue water classic, the Darwin Ambon almost reached 100 when due to sectarian unrest in that area the event was suspended in the late nineties. The popular event started in 1976 when six yachts sailed to the capital of the Spice Islands. A deputation from Ambon visited Darwin in 2006 requesting that the race be restarted. Due to safety and security concerns a group from the Dinah Beach Cruising Yacht Association flew to the island for three days, they met with the Governor, Vice Governor, the Mayor and Senior Government department officials they also spent much time mingling with the locals at the markets and other public venues. On their arrival back in Darwin they had no hesitation in recommending that the event be restarted and the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2007 was the date set.

A small fleet of five were started at precisely 1100 hours by *HMAS Albany* off Darwin's Stokes Hill Wharf and Wayne Huxley's 15 metre catamaran, *Cruise Missile* stormed out of the harbour followed by another 13.4 metre catamaran *Kishka*, skippered by Mike Butler. The three mono's were *Enigma* a Adam's 11.2 skippered by Garry Clayden, *Lothlorien* another Adam's 11.2 which had just been launched and skippered by Jim Grierson and *Jasmin* who came all the way from Tasmania, with Mike O'Keefe at the helm.

Sat phones were utilised to get the twice daily positions from the yachts and at the first sked almost every skipper reported some sea sickness amongst their crew as they headed north from Australia's landmass. *Cruise Missile's* Wayne Huxley, a Schonning design had guaranteed to all before their departure that the 52 hour and 20 minute race record for the 600 nautical mile race set by John Panches *Zuma* in 1997 would fall. They had been cruising along at 14 knots about 150 miles out when an unexpected gust saw the log touch 17 knots but then the Screecher screeched under the pressure and disintegrated into the Arafura Sea during this trauma the spinnaker pole got

bent rendering the chances of any record attempt impossible causing Wayne to eat much international humble pie. All the yachts enjoyed fresh South Easterlies for most of the race with reports of minor "yacht type problems" at every sked.

When all the Skippers finalised the Indonesian arrival formalities the party began with a welcoming ceremony, here local dancers invited the crews to join in, which they did but one red eyed crew was heard to say "Shit! Its 10:30 in the morning, I've yet to have a beer and here I am dancing on a muddy field sober!" Then there was the Mayor's reception at his official residence, then the Vice Governors reception, then of course the Governor had one also. Buses ensured that everyone was collected from the anchorage and then delivered home safely afterwards. The sports morning was also a hit when team Australia triumphed at the tug of war, the soccer and the still race but came off second best in the Bechak relay.

The duel honours went to *Cruise Missile* with *Kishka* second. *Enigma* was first in cruising, second was *Lothlorien* and third *Jasmin*.

Comments from the crews after the race were all very positive and they will all be going again in 2008. Some remarked that there was just too much hospitality in the form of free cold beers and delicious Indonesian food (bloody wingers!) To cater for the huge demand from circumnavigators sailing from east to west at that this time of the year the Committee have introduced a Rally division details at [www.darwinambonrace.com.au](http://www.darwinambonrace.com.au).

Another feature is that Wayne Huxley will escort yachts with *Cruise Missile* after Ambon to Macassar, calling into Ternate, Manado, Pare Pare and a party on the Equator.

Because of the continued support we have received from the Northern Territory Government and the Dinah Beach Cruising Yacht Association Inc, entry and crew fees have been greatly reduced, now there's no excuse not to participate!

See you at the start line on the  
26<sup>th</sup> July 2008!

Colin Blair, Coordinator

## Louisiades Cruising Rally Papua New Guinea 2008

Cairns - Papua New Guinea - Cairns

20 September - Late October

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For more information on events see: [www.thecoastalpassage.com/events](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com/events)

## PORT 2 PORT 2008

For the ninth year running the Bundaberg Cruising Yacht Club is again organising the Port2Port Yacht Rally from the Pacific Islands to Burnett Heads.

This year promises to be the biggest rally ever with record entries of 54 yachts already received. The reputation of the rally is now reaching far-flung ports with entries being received as early as March this year and an early entry for the 2008 P2P Rally already on the board.

The boats are due to arrive at the Bundaberg

Port Marina on 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October with festivities kicking off with an Aussie bar-b-que on the Wednesday evening 31<sup>st</sup> October.

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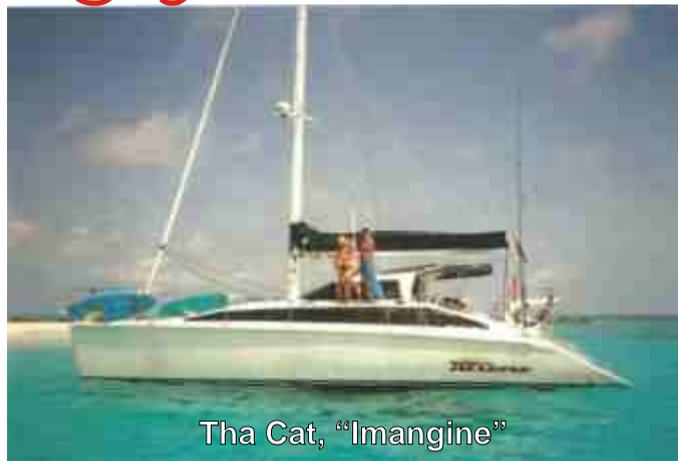
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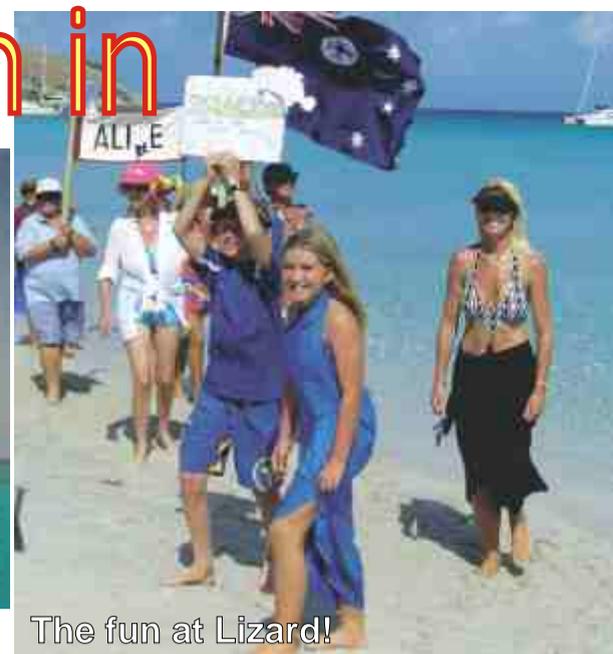
# Sinking your teeth in



The kids, Rhyes and Kendall



Tha Cat, "Imagine"



The fun at Lizard!

Story & photos by Brett Gray, (ex ) SY Imagine

Here's a story of a family with 2.3, bit tired with the world and ready for a revamp. Started with "Yikes", looks like we've sold our business. What'll we do now? "Epiphany" hey Honey, lets buy a boat and just sail away. Think of it all, glass of champers whilst sailing along for 6 to 12 mths. How easy huh.

So with some quiet snivelling, we poured our hard earned cash into a lovely catamaran [Granger 40 called Imagine], ready for the champers and all the trimmings. Headed off in "May 02" into the sunset waving bye to our friends who thought we'd slipped a cog. Nevertheless, we persevered, with them all saying, "Brett will never handle the slow way of life" and "Donna wont last long without Cappuccino's". Our 6 monther turned to 6 of the best years of our lives.

Before our big exit, a super sailor [Steve off Karma] said they were off to Lizard. I immediately replied, "yeah, think we'll go there too". After congratulating ourselves on making the Witsunday's without sinking, and still not coming across this Lizard place, I found it on the map, a tiny speck way up in the top corner of some distant stained old chart. Not to be outdone, we boldly set out for this speck, and we made it around late Oct.

## "WE'VE FOUND PARADISE"

Had a week of food and beer onboard, we sunbaked, climbed the hills, went ashore for sundowners with other real yachties and generally engaged in the moment of glory.

It started to blow on the sixth day [as it does]. It blew harder, then the wind warning came on the VHF. 40 to 50 or so knots for the next few days. OK, everyone's gotta eat less. Kids, you got to only have one meal a day. Ghandy did it- so can you. We managed to swap some yeast [about all we had left] for a tomato. We divided this into 4 parts. Now savour it in your mouths kids. Ha ha. (not quite that bad but we were getting some funny meals) Every yachtie was starved, did most of us some good I think! Tomato sauce wheatbix for dinner. Mmmm yummy. Beerless for a week, as we weakly struggled in our dinghy past stinkboats "Bert and Inghy" on Coolong, here they were, pouring bottles of beer over the back. I weakly called, what are you doing Bert. He replied, I need these 50 stubbies of beer emptied so that I can bottle my next homebrew. I offered my services along with Serenity (John and Karen). This kind offer was taken up by Bert, the only stipulation was that he needed the bottles back empty in 3 days. We managed to provide the necessary service to Bert and were greatly strengthened.

About 3 headaches later, the wind eased to a dull roar, so we beat our way back to Cooktown, where the kids and I bought a 2 litre bucket of Chocky icecream, and with 3 spoons, conquered it totally outside the supermarket. Donna watched with amazement (or horror), she didn't get

left very much either.

We flew South to the Gold Coast under kite with the Northerlies and only once raised the main. Made it a week before Xmas.

Actually, in-between the terrors of learning to get the kite down in 35 knots, and being [ir] responsible school teachers (quit laughing thank you), something happened to us. No, we didn't go nuts or anything, but we did slip into a way of life not available anywhere else.

## "Next year is gonna be great kids"

As I do, I spent our off season thinking up new tortures for the family. Decided on offshore!

Yep, gonna hit the magnificent shores of the Louisiades. We zoomed up the coast to Townsville, where we met some other sadistic loonies, also setting themselves up for this offshore passage. For most, it was their first one too. Boat full to bursting, [under] waterline way down underwater, we got the go from the weatherman, and promptly sailed out into, not 15 to 20 like they said, but 15 to 50. First night was 27knots of beam on sea and wind. Pretty choppy all the next day however we were averaging 10.5 knots. Next night pretty much stunk. Were down to the third reef by afternoon, and small jib. Got rid of the main altogether by nightfall as we watched the gauge climb steadily from 27 to 29 to 31 to 36 and gusting way higher. The sea got boisterous during this phase, and was easier for us all to stay in the lounge. Kinda wedged ourselves in as "Imagine" took a beating from all directions. As first light gave enough to see, I was better off not knowing. Huge cascades were breaking over the roof, and flying through the rigging. The wind was shrieking and the air filled with foam and spray. Our tv aerial was torn from the second set of spreaders by green water, this gives you an idea of what we were amongst. However our Cat never failed. She rose at a pace to sink your stomach, then broke through the waves which were steep and thin enough that you could clearly see the sun behind, before falling down the trailing side ready for the next onslaught.

Upon the worst of the crashes and bashes, the kids asked me how we were faring, of which I honestly answered, we are getting through ok. I had received a vhf radio call from another 36ft full length keel yacht out there with us, they had four complete knockdowns in the night, had lost their engine but were ok.

They were very experienced, and had not had as volatile a sea in 31 yrs of offshore or in 85 knots, (of which they had encountered).

We slowly made our way to our destination with wind slightly eased but still rough conditions. No food or sleep to speak of for 3 ½ days, no water (tanks got contaminated) apart from a 2 litre container I managed to fill on the third day [watermaker], we entered the outer reef at 8pm the fourth night, luckily visible in the moonlight, got behind a small island and dropped the pick.

The noise relief was intense. Cats are extremely noisy in rough conditions. Earplugs are essential for offshore. Donna cooked steak eggs and chips (Eggs were ready scrambled). We drank the champers and were smashed in 10 seconds from lack of food, and all sat there with stunned looks on our faces.

Woke up to a beautiful palm fringed island with crystal clear water and white sand. Didn't extract the pick for 3 days.

Funny as it might seem, kids were ok with the whole deal, when asked after spending all day fixing, pumping dry, cleaning and wiping the salt and foam out of our home, they said "this is ok, great spot and we'd do it again". Must be all the good training I've implanted in them for so long! We spent 3 magic months there, learning much about life before returning to OZ upon a flat sea.

Things learnt-

- [1] Don't listen to weather forecasters. [an experienced cruiser suggested we wait for a better pattern].
- [2] Learn about weather [most important] "or is that the first thing".
- [3] Earplugs in a cat.
- [4] Kids are tough.
- [5] If you want to get drunk, don't sleep, eat, or drink for 3 ½ days. {One glass is all it takes.}

Did another year up around the top before selling her to another couple, who are out there somewhere, doing and living this amazing journey we are all on.

This is where our real next adventure started...

"HEY KIDS, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT GOING AROUND THE WORLD?"



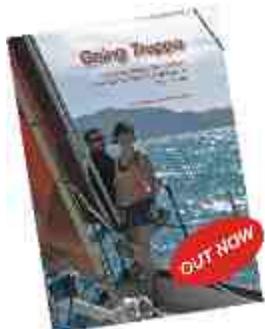
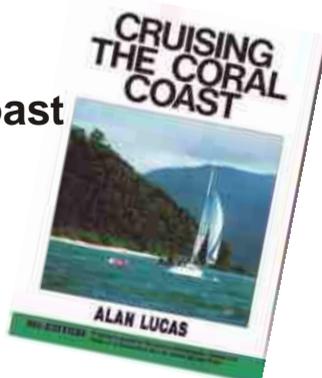
The instigator AKA, Skipper

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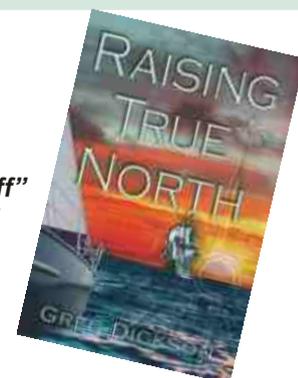
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\*Australia, OS please inquire

# Pirate Chocolate Cake



The Pirates, Matthew, Natasha & Allison (Mum) below

## Ingredients:

- 125g butter
  - 2 cups flour
  - 4 eggs
  - 1 1/3 cups sugar
  - 1 cup water 3 tsp B.P.
  - 2 Tblsp cocoa
  - 1 block white chocolate for icing
1. Beat eggs and sugar.
  2. Melt butter and water and add cocoa
  3. Sift flour and B.P.
  4. Stir in egg and sugar
  5. Add the water
  6. Bake in a big tin for 25 minutes at 180 degrees
  7. Melt the chocolate and spread on cake when cool.
- Enjoy!



# Natasha's Pirate Story

By Natasha Harper, SY "Kalida"

Hi I am Jill and my brother is Sam. I am going to tell you a story that happened a long time ago when I was just a little girl.

Many years ago our Mum and Dad dies and we were orphaned. We lived in an inn for many years on our own.

One stormy, cold, wet, rainy night a man flung the creaky doors wide open on a flash of lightning. I was expecting to be scared and have to run but I just stood there. He was a retired pirate his name was Peg-leg Ned. He sat at the bar always making sure he could see the door. I asked Sam why that man is looking at the door so often. Sam replied that he was Peg-Leg Ned. He looked really scary. I didn't know why he looked at the door, but I knew he was up to something. Something illegal, something unlawful, something really rotten!

One cold, wet winter's day Peg-Leg Ned had an old crumpled up map. He said to us if we are ever on this island with a spade follow this map and dig up the treasure box and have the treasure inside. He said there are millions of dollars in that box. There is enough money for you to buy a house. Two days later we went into his room and saw that it had been ransacked. There were books, paper, clothes, pens, covers, cushions, sheets, but then we slowly and carefully looked up at the bed. He was gone, disappeared, vanished all so soon, all of a sudden. We both looked at each other and then we both cried out in unison, "What happened to him and his room?"

When a few months had past we went to hire a crew and a ship with our inheritance money. So we set sail to North Africa. We finally reached Fortune Island. We went to shore to find the treasure chest. The map showed us it was on the other side of the island. To reach it we had to pass the snakes, crocs and quick sand. We started walking so far we were safe until we got to crocodile swamp and a croc was heading

right for us. I said jump and we jumped and held on to a vine till it went away. We could see a patch of sand where we could rest for a while, but before I could say a word Sam ran ahead and jumped on the sand. Before long we saw he was going deeper and deeper into the sand. I told him to hold on to the vine overhead and I climbed up the tree and pulled the vine down the other side of the tree and hauled him out of the quicksand. Then he said do we have to go on. I said if you want to get the treasure you have to keep going to get it so he did. When we got to a small jungle we saw lots of birds and a snake slithered along the path. It was a death adder but it did no harm to us. We finally reached the box and got it back safely to the boat and set sail for home.

Soon after we lost sight of land we heard the crew talking about something and they were laughing as well. We hid behind some rum barrels and listened they were talking about Peg-Leg Ned. They said he was locked up in the brig where there was a leak so he had to put his finger in the hole so he did not drown and die. When they weren't looking we went down into the brig and tried to unlock him but it was no use the bars wouldn't budge not even a little bit, not even a mm. Finally we got him out. We fed him and put him to bed.

When we went back on deck the crew was having a fight because they were all drunk. When they were not looking I cut the wires on the wheel and we started heading for the rocks and then we hit the rocks and started to sink very quickly. We stole the tender and got out with the treasure box. Nobody was hurt, so we rowed safely to shore.

Just as I opened my chest to count my gorgeous, glittering gold I heard a voice in the background calling "Jill, Jill wake up Honey! You will be late for school." I realized it had all been a dream.

The End

## The reason for the naming of the Pirate Chocolate Cake....

As a part of doing home schooling on the boat through the Sydney Distance Education Primary school Natasha and Matthew did a project on pirates. Who says school can't be fun!

The children had to read lots of pirate stories and immerse themselves in the lingo, clothing and songs used by pirates. Of course this was no hardship for our budding Jack Sparrow. They had to write a pirate story, create a treasure map and as a grand finale throw a pirate party. The invitations went out in the form of treasure maps with GPS coordinates showing where our boat would be.

The kids delivered the invites by dinghy to other boat kids. The children served the Pirate Chocolate Cake, pirate punch, skull and crossbone biscuits and peg-leg sandwiches.

All the kids (and mum) dressed up as pirates and played pirate games. The actual recipe is one that has been handed down by Nanna.

David Harper, SY "Kalida"



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- Northern Territory Coast
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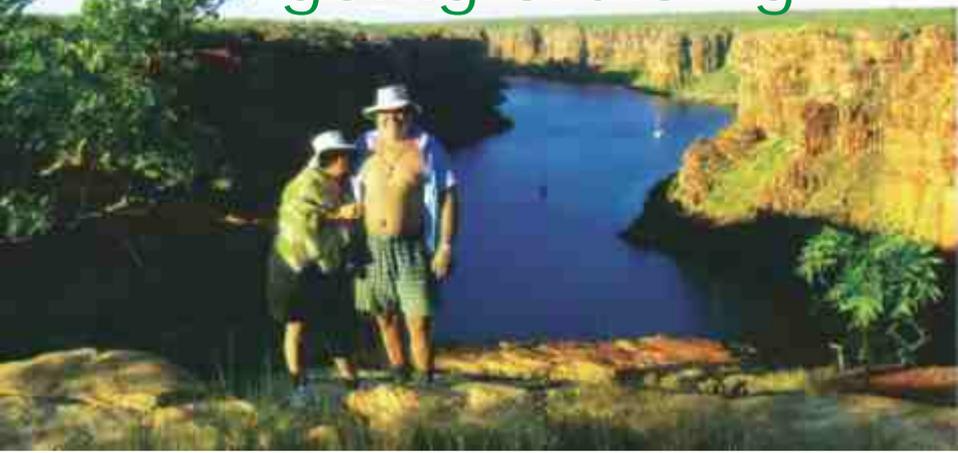
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# So, you're going cruising...



Story & photo by John Joyce, SY "Emu"

Changing from a landlubber to a sailor can take considerable preparation and determination. I guess the idea of jumping onto a boat and taking off to the horizon has its romance but in reality it takes a great deal more than that. To undertake a venture at sea, over a reasonable distance requires considerable preparation of mind and equipment. The adventurer needs to be a carpenter, plumber, electrician, auto mechanic, refrigeration mechanic, navigator, survivor and inventor. So just when do you start out on your venture? I was prepared to depart as soon as I got my gear on the boat but my partner Cheryl wanted to take the house with her. That is; the refrigerator, freezer, hot water system, washing machine, microwave oven and other luxuries of life. This meant that I had to install equipment to accommodate her needs and therefore the voyage was put off until finances were sufficient to outfit our vessel. Having said that, I still anxiously waited the day that we could weigh anchor and leave the rat race for a life of peace and solitude.

the path of earlier explorers, enjoying solitude and adventure, was rapidly shattered when I discovered that the idyllic lifestyle was changed due to restrictions placed upon sailors like myself, by State Laws, Officials, hire boats and the expanding civilisation.

My wife Cheryl, our dog (a blue roan cocker spaniel) and myself, set off from Rockhampton with our friend Glen. Glen sailed his own boat, a steel 40 foot vessel ketch named 'Destiny', whilst we took our boat, a Ferro cement 50 foot sloop, named 'Emu'. Our vessel had all the mod-cons; a Waeco 250litre upright refrigerator, a Waeco 200 litre upright freezer, a Schenker water desalinator, gas stove and oven, microwave, electric hot water system, TV, etc etc (Cheryl's idea of doing it rough). To accommodate all this required an electric extension cord to the nearest power plant so I installed six 80 watt solar panels, a Soma wind generator (for land use but converted to marine) and a 6kva generator.

We intended to cruise to the Kimberly's in Western Australia and set aside a couple of years to do it in. The wind, unfortunately, was not always kind to us and more often than not we were forced to motor. Fishing, swimming and beachcombing is a great way to live but

don't expect to do what you want wherever you please. First there is the owner of the Island/beach to consider. If it is privately owned then you are restricted to the sand. If it is owned by the Government you are restricted to your boat. Most of the anchorages up the Queensland Coast are now National or Marine Parks - some also have Resorts on them. Going into these anchorages require a sewage holding tank on your vessel. (Holding tanks for sewage on a vessel is a problem and I will not go into it because the powers to be still haven't understood their own legislation, let alone what is practically required.)

A friendly bar-b-que on a Parks area is forbidden because fires are not allowed on the beach. The standard reason for this is that a myriad of island life need the dead timber for a habitat. I have usually found that there is always enough driftwood on the beach to facilitate a bar-b-que but that does not enter the equation. I have yet to meet the real yachty who vandalises the environment that he is in. It is my experience that the real yachty is the best defender of the environment you could find. (I am convinced the accumulation of rubbish in an area is from weekend fishermen who set up camp in an area and leave their rubbish behind.)

You are permitted to swim in the majority of places but this is sometimes seen as an intrusion by the tourist operators because you and your boat have encroached upon an area that they believe is set aside for their clients. If you take your dog onto a State Park however, you commit the ultimate sin - pollution and genocide! My experiences in this sort of situation are many but the best I recall is when a young woman approached me on the beach at Low Islands, outside Port Douglas. Miss Herr Hitler advised me that she was the Head Ranger on the Island (without any proof of authority) and to take my dog back to the boat and not to bring him onto her beach again. When I attempted to give him a swim she again intervened and advised me he was not allowed in the water. (To the best of my knowledge, Marine Parks end at the low tide mark and National Parks begin at the high tide mark. May I therefore presume that the area between the low tide mark and the high tide mark is neutral ground?)

Common sense has nothing to do with politics or laws and the enforcement of State Legislation has nothing to do with common sense. I sometimes wonder how some of these State Officials are trained. Are they thrown a book and told to read it? Is there instruction for trainees? Who teaches interpretation of law/legislation to the trainee? If a State Official confronts you with a Legislation under his/her jurisdiction then the Officials determination/interpretation is unquestionable. Forget using common sense or a different interpretation of the legislation - it wont wash.

I really do not have a gripe with Customs Officials but I do believe their harassment of cruising folk can be reduced by simple communication. Whilst we were cruising Queensland we were regularly confronted by Customs aircraft. When we were anchored for several days at the same location Customs Aircraft usually buzzed us every day requesting our particulars. Now these guys do a great job but please, why can't they interact and have their log of the vessels they encounter despatched to all their staff so as all Officers are aware of what vessels are in their area. Northern Territory Customs seem to do it as they just 'fly over' after your vessel has been identified. Funny though, I have found the Customs aircraft to be extremely diligent in areas of popular cruising but noticeably absent in secluded or non-popular areas.

All is not doom and gloom however, because I would recommend the cruising life to all and sundry. If my partner would agree to do it again I would have pulled up anchor yesterday. I have met so many interesting people and visited so many places that I find it hard to recall most names and dates. To those cruising folk I met, I thank you for your friendship and hope to see you again on the water, somewhere, sometime. To those folk who are considering the cruising life I say get rid of your 'marina-itis' (a term used to identify the yachty who remains at anchor somewhere, continually upgrading his boat in an attempt to reach utopia), and get out there and see Australia - you won't regret it.

My dream of cruising the Australian coast in



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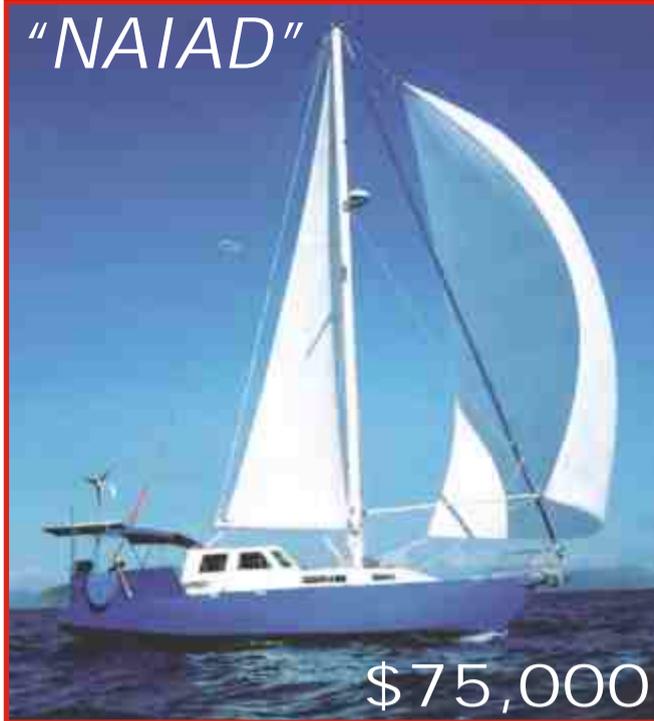
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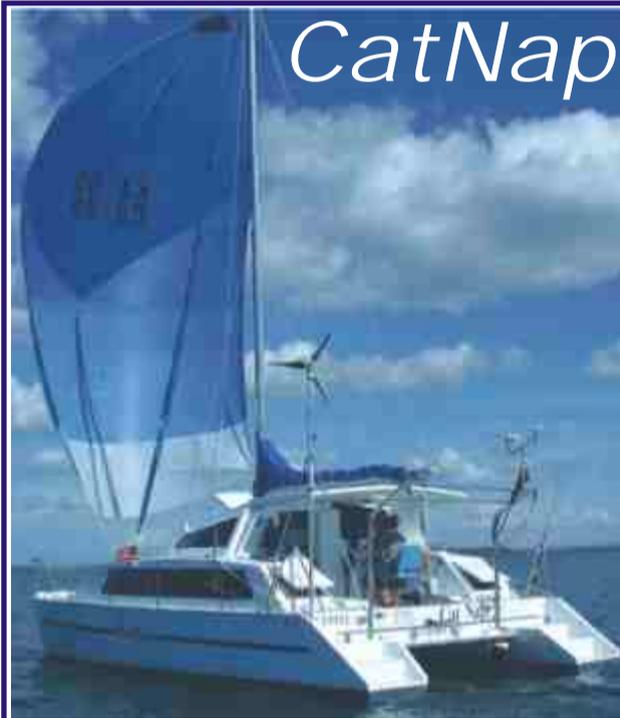
Regretfully, we are selling to buy a larger boat and are walking away leaving all sundries.

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See [TCP](http://TCP) web site for more pictures & inventory.

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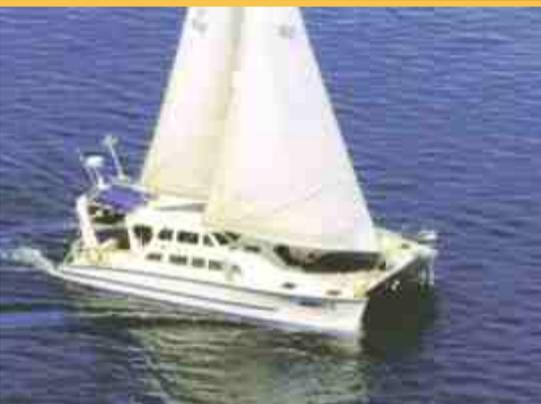
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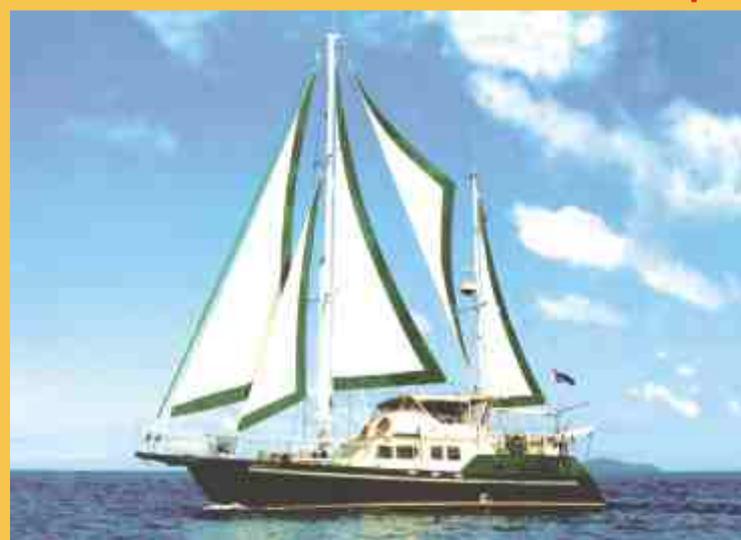
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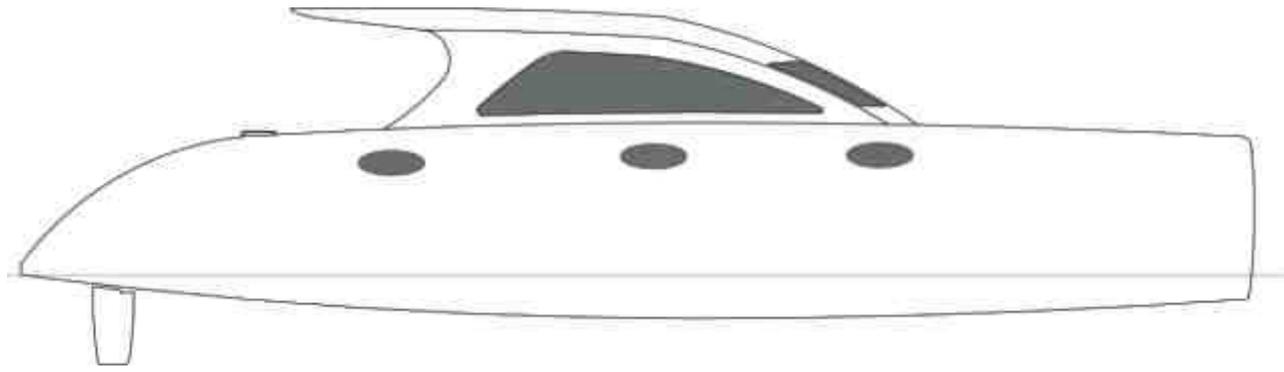
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# The Future Home of TCP

## Passage People

Whilst this project occupies the editors time Passage People may have to be restricted to pics and stories of those who stop by to help! Want your pic on the back page? Bring sandpaper!



TCP aims to be the first national boating publication to build their own boat and publish from the water. Upon completion of this craft the office moves aboard. For the sake of authenticity and the editors sanity....

by Bob Norson

## The New Bob Oram 39C

It first started as a realisation that I was talking myself into a plan that I was meant to be researching for others. In TCP # 13 I did an article "The Multi Eye for the Mono Guy". The piece was a great success and since I posted it to the web site (see technical articles) has been a steady download for tens of thousands of readers. At that time two things had become apparent, first was that TCP was definitely not going to go away. My little hobby had gone wrong and I was no longer a happily retired person, aspiring to peaceful old fart status and.. it was becoming just as clear that our beloved old "WhiteBird" was exactly the wrong kind of boat for this now uncontrollable life style. Big thundering, high maintenance steely with not quite enough room to fit the gear for publishing TCP. A great boat for our original purpose, blue water with a circumnav up my sleeve, but a total encumbrance for our new reality, coastal cruising and workaboard. Besides, (incidentally of course) I had been on a few faster boats and I liked it!

So, what is the perfect solution? First on my list of required attributes was low maintenance. That means plastic. Now before I start WWII with the fans of alloy or other materials, I grant there is some subjectivity in the choice but overall a glass fibre composite fits the bill best.

The new boat would have to have room for the computers and printers used to publish TCP and still be comfortable for long term liveaboard. A catamaran of about 40 feet would have the accommodation space in a bridge deck configuration to allow this.

The boat would have to be affordable... BUGGER!! It was easy up till now. A new or good condition second hand cat of that size and construction is in the \$300K to \$500K range even for our modest fitout requirements. This kind of expense just couldn't be justified. The only way out is to build her. But another problem is time.. or the shortness of it. To simplify, graceful curves would have to be substituted for lines and flat panels but there just wasn't a design on the market that suited the narrow criteria perfectly. This was Bob Oram's kind of thing and I was heading that way on a property search anyway, so I took my crude sketches and cruder ideas and drove from Bowendown to Hervey Bay.

I found myself sitting with Bob Oram in front of his powerful modern computer working on a program right out of the DOS dark ages. "Plyboat" is something you can download for about the cost of a slab of beer but the thing worked for designing the hulls. We did have some arguing about sheer. Bob's first version was quite flat like the 44C but I liked the effect from his 38 Mango II design. A halfway point was printed out but it still looked flat to me until Bob advised to take the paper and hold it somewhat edgewise toward my face and look 'down' the sheer and he was right. Bob then pointed out the similarity in hull profile to "Dog on Cat", a boat he drew several years ago. A boat I had seen and admired. With the objective of simplicity, a cabin top was drawn as well but has since been replaced and may be modified again. The hulls are the big thing, the cabin design can be changed almost on a whim with this style of construction.

Another trip south with a cabin sketch and a few other ideas and questions... and the "39C" took shape. With Bob's guidance the lines were refined and improved. I am proud to have contributed to the look and marketing philosophy (I believe this boat suits a lot of potential builders, amateur and professional) but there is no way I would commit this kind of money and effort into something that didn't have professional experience behind it. Bob actually made her into a boat that should work well and I believe address's a vacuum in the market.

**Size:** I wanted a boat that I felt Kay and I could handle and as stated earlier, would be big enough for the gear. About 40 feet seemed right but... many marinas are getting touchy about berth sizes and because many marinas use 12 metres as a break point in price... 11.98 metre (39' 4") is perfect. I won't have to lie to the marina office! (Like I used to!)

**Material:** Bob Oram and I had much discussion about this. Whilst Bob was in favour of Duflex panels from the start because of the speed of build and stiffness, FGI had a very attractive price on foam at the time. I figured out the costs and it seemed that foam and vinyl ester resin and glass would come out to just over half of the cost of the balsa core Duflex panels from ATL. I had talked to designer/builder, Bob Burgess earlier who had advised how to use that stuff for a flat panel boat. He suggested lofting up a full length panel of foam on a flat surface and have two guys working laying the glass. One mixing resin and spreading and the other wetting the cloth in, then trimming edges with a Stanley knife whilst green. Even so it would take more time than the few days it took us to glue ATL panels together and there would also be the problem of fumes. But then the epoxy like that used on the ATL panels runs a risk too. I know people that claim they have almost killed themselves with epoxy poisoning building a boat. It's an acquired toxic reaction. Some get it and some can swim in the stuff. On the positive side of the panels is that the bulk of the epoxy work is done at the factory. I considered the options carefully and decided to go with the Duflex panels from ATL but I ordered only the materials to the sheer. The decks, cabin and numerous other bits can be done with a variety of other materials, foam sandwich, strip plank, plywood, and polypropylene honeycomb for example, or finish the lot with Duflex.

**Keels or Boards:** This is one area I opted for what could be more complexity. Boards may increase build time over keels and take up some hull space BUT... they should permit a higher point of sail and less wetted area, not to mention a ridiculously skinny draft.

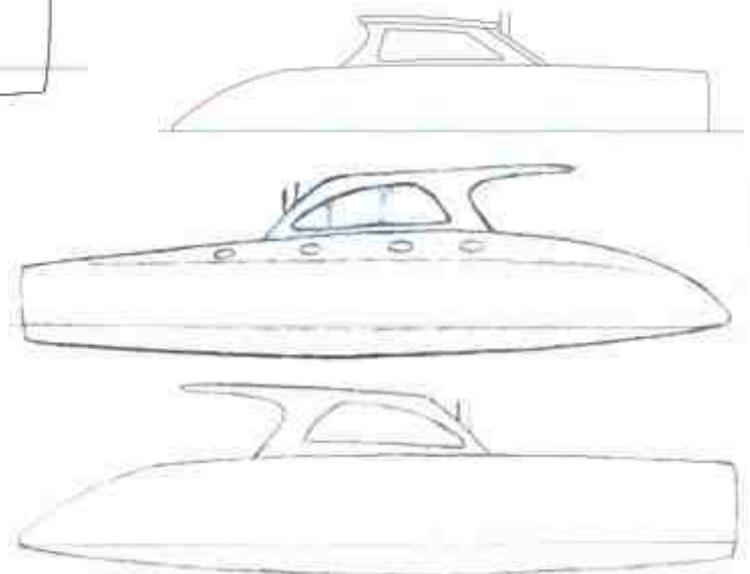
**Auxiliary power:** For cost, simplicity, and weight, the twin 4 stroke outboard option is right for us.

**Cabin:** The first sketches showed a very simple thing that was intended for the easiest construction. Flat panel sides with an overhanging roof, something like a garden shed frankly. That later was modified after I thought about how panels could be curved with relative ease to enhance aesthetics. While Bob and I were at the computer it occurred to us that reducing the angle of the forward part of the structure would carry it over the two forward cabins... not conventional, but why not? At least for now it sounds like a good idea but could be adjusted later.

**Fitout:** Our experience fitting out WhiteBird gives confidence that this can go quicker and cheaper than you might think. Except for the galley and main cabin it might be little more than a coat of house paint. No fairing except to clean a stuff up perhaps. Well placed small bits of fine timber and white surfaces can work wonders. We equate comfort with a lack of clutter... so we plan to live in luxury. I noticed Bob drew in a holding tank but I told him we already have a bucket! He insisted....

**What About the Money?** Here is the scoop so far. The partial kit of duflex panels with accessories for gluing and taping has cost \$32K AUD. The full kit including bridgedeck cabin top would come in at about \$52K but that still doesn't include materials for boards and temporary frames and forebeam etc... Figure another \$8000. If I can get an assembled shell to lock up for \$65K, I've won. I've allowed a budget of \$150K total but I hope we will beat that. It will depend on the accessories we want, like a screacher and furler. ....or...

**How have we gone so far...?** Whilst ATL have a reasonable reputation our luck wasn't good. Maybe it was because our parcel was shipped out on the eve of the holiday season before they closed for several weeks. Whatever the case we have some quality control faults that I don't think should have been allowed to ship and I don't yet know how to quantify. Hopefully this won't slow the project much but it was a disappointing way to start. The TCP web site has details of our problems and progress with a continuing log with photo gallery and comments along the way.



A few preliminary sketches and an early cad. The bottom one seemed to be getting somewhere..



It was great to see some of my rough ideas and grade school sketches turn into a real boat. This is probably the hardest way for a professional to work!



The first step in the process is gluing the panels together Then cutting the pre-routed shapes out.



When a bunch of panels are glued together, you just start sawing though some tabs and the sections are released. Clever system!