



®

83rd Edition  
April - May  
2017

# The Coastal Passage

## Darwin to Ambon! Let's race!



*Racing crews join the Ambon Dragon Boat fleet for a Fun Race*

*photo by Lindsey Wharton*

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# CYCLONE DEBBIE -

## The catastrophe eastern Australia will never forget

Its difficult to comprehend the immense destruction Cyclone Debbie has done to such a vast area beginning March 27. Facts like Hamilton Island recorded 263kph! In January, 2013 Cyclone Oswald ripped up a large portion of this coastline, but was not near as ferocious as Debbie.

There are many photos and video online to view for those of you living outside Australia that may not have heard the news. If you want to share yours, feel free to send them and your story to TCP.

In TCP's report on Cyclone Oswald the last words were:

*"So there will be happy stories but mostly tears for all who have suffered and are still suffering. It's a good time to lend a helping hand to those who need it and an open ear to hear their stories. A time of reflection, learning, putting one foot in front of the other, waiting for the days to heal and get a bit better."*

The same words ring true now as many that have been affected are coming to grips with what they will do next...

Kay & Bob

## Contributors

*What's your story?  
It can't be about you  
without you!*



**Jon Hickling, SV Ruby Charlotte**  
**Peter Kerr, MV Makin Tracks**  
**Don McIntyre, SC Explorer**  
**Stuart Mears, SY Velella**  
**John Nichols, SY Orient Express**  
**Bob & Kay Norson, SC BareBones**  
**Sue Streeter, SY Pacifica**  
**Bo Wharton SY Mango Madness**

As always, TCP very much appreciates your letters and other contributions that provides the rich forum of ideas, issues and news. For information on feature contribution requirements and awards, see the TCP web site: "contributions" page.

## The value of things

Cruising in foreign lands changes the value of things. I have learned much about how to economise. For example, I reuse ziplock bags. I reuse paper plates, sometimes getting 3 or 4 meals out of them. Every container from a food supply is scrutinised for future use and cleaned out and set aside... in case. I have a lot of old rope. I save tired sand paper I would have tossed in a second when building *BareBones*. I could go on but by now you think I am desperate or crazy or both.

It's not that things are more expensive here in Asia, most things are less expensive than Australia. *EVERYWHERE* is less expensive than Australia. I once proved that you can live in Paris cheaper than you can in Brisbane and let's not even mention Sydney.

Western cultures are mobile, Asian cultures less so. Besides our pioneer beginnings in America and Australia, car ownership may be a profound game changer. Retailing in western cultures tends toward centralised, large scale business with multi acre car parks. Asians tend to stay put and retailing tends to be specialised and almost covert. Asians know every shop and where to find every item. They don't need a big brand name, Woolworths or Walmart to find things.

My article in this edition, "Asia for beginners", shows that even though some cities in Asia have retail emporiums of western nature, they still don't threaten the shops in Chinatown or the village market. They co-exist.

Things I take for granted and have used since they were invented, like ziplock bags, aren't found in the traditional stores very often. Sometimes, but not reliably. So when I find them I get as many as I can justify storing and economise because if one goes out looking for a particular thing it may take days of trudging about looking, asking, which raises the cost in time and effort value. If you stop at an island with a firm shopping list you may never leave.

I know some one here that would love some FireBall candy, she uses it to flavour whiskey. Anyone who knows where to get them and is willing to send them to the Philippines would make a friend for life!

Value is often unrelated to cost.

**Bob**



## The Coastal Passage

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Kay Norson: senior volunteer, TCP format organizer and semi - retired postie.

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# My first trip to Asia - and glad it was the Philippines!

It was time to catch up with Bob and *BareBones*. I had a month free and as I always wanted to go the Philippines. I was happy to hear Bob could meet me in Manila. The best word I can describe Filipinos is "pride". They love their country and from the very poor to the very rich this word shows everywhere. Security is taken seriously and there was never an accident to witness while I was there. Problems of the past are being addressed and there is a feeling of being safe when travelling around.

There is little begging - when some kids played the game they were seriously scolded. They work hard and sell what they grow, make or a service. There is always a "Thank you Mam". Pride shows as their cars, bikes, supermarkets, ferries, etc. are most often clean and well maintained.

The best thing is most speak English or at least enough to make communicating easy. We travelled on ferries, jeepneys, trikes, buses and taxis and walked a lot. Walking is the way to see how the cities and villages go about their days. There is always a cool place to stop in and get a meal and a drink. Just before I left we discovered some waterfalls nearby and a pool at a resort was also available.

I would recommend to give the Philippines a go - there are some great cruisers guides available as well.

**Kay**





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# Welcome to OCEAN ADVENTURE!

Sailor, Adventurer and Explorer Don McIntyre of SC Explorer joins TCP as a regular columnist.

His passion is adventure:

*"Adventure is any activity with an unknown outcome."*

Photos courtesy of Don McIntyre

## Wooden Treasures in cool climates

Sailing away from Adelaide in 1978 began a great Ocean Adventure that continues to this day. In 1983 I settled in Sydney until I bought my first home in Tassie in 2000. I should be a local by now, but the second head is yet to appear. Apparently, they stopped issuing them when the Mona Gallery arrived.

My path to become a local has been tough. I travel a lot, so in the past five years I have spent an average of just four weeks a year in Australia. When it comes to the Australian Wooden Boat Festival (AWBF) in Hobart however, I desperately want to be a local, as it is an event to be very proud of!! The last time I attended was in 2009 displaying my wooden whaler, *Bounty Boat* before setting off on the Bligh Mutiny Voyage re-enactment. Every other year I have been in Antarctica when the AWBF was held.

*continued next page...*



*Timber boat heaven in Hobart*

## OCEAN ADVENTURE!

Quite simply the AWBF is something you should experience once in your life, even if you are not a sailor. The vibe is very special and the atmosphere indescribable with a mix of community, passion, beautiful things and happy days. It makes you smile just to see everyone enjoying life. It truly inspires people and maybe even you! It makes you feel lucky that we are in Australia and have clear blue skies and the freedom to enjoy simple pleasures. You don't have to own a wooden boat to enjoy this festival and did I tell you about Tassie and Hobart. WOW!

In the past 17 years Tassie seems to have grown up and is now a waking tourism giant. As for sailing and boating if you have not experienced the great cruising grounds, start planning your expedition now...you will NOT regret it. Sadly, I just sold my house in Tassie and am making the permanent move to Tonga, but you can bet your left Gonad that I will be back to Tassie as often as.

*continued next page...*



***A very original ERIC design sister ship to the famous SUHAILI sailed into history by Sir Robin Knox Johnston in the 1968 Sunday Times Golden Globe Race. I very nearly bought this very boat over 10 years ago to recreate his voyage.***





**Fully restored Hobart Governors launch!**



**The late Jack Earl's (marine artist) beautiful 22 Herrishoff "SMOKEY CAPE"**



**This guy was pumping a pipe organ playing songs, while playing a trumpet, while steering with his feet and driving the crowds bonkers... EVERYone loved him...me too..! So much fun that day!!**

# Tasmania's Australian Wooden Boat Festival - *Everyone needs to go at least once!* [www.australianwoodenboatfestival.com.au](http://www.australianwoodenboatfestival.com.au)



## BBC MUTINY

In 1983 a descendant of William Bligh living in Australia decided to re-enact the famous 4000-mile open boat journey of survival of Bligh and 18 of his men following the infamous Mutiny by Fletcher Christian. The sailed from Tonga to Kupang in West Timor. Reading about that back then lead to me do something similar 27 years later.

There had been other re-enactments before and since that 1983 voyage with varying degrees of success and luxury. I think my voyage in 2010 was, up till then, the most authentic and we paid the price sailing without charts and virtually no food or water. I lost 18KG. Yes, it was hard and yes we nearly all did die, but above all else it was a grand adventure and a lot of fun. You can read a little about it here <http://bit.ly/2nuUZTj> and part two here <http://bit.ly/2nboJB6>

Since then I have heard of many who would like to and have been planning the same adventure, so I was not surprised when approached in late 2015 by Windfall Films to assist them approaching the BBC to develop a Bounty Boat TV series. I gave them access to everything we learned and experienced and suggested many things. Together we headed back out to Bligh's cave on the island of Tofua just 30 miles from our own island home Nomuka IKI in the Kingdom of Tonga to consider set locations. It worked. The BBC said YES! The Series MUTINY was shot last year and has aired in the UK and will shortly be screened all over the world. Ratings were HUGE!

I was not allowed to talk about it at all until after the release, so thought you may now enjoy this picture. I managed to get Chris Jacks on as one of the boat crew. He had entered the 2018 Golden Globe Race and we were helping his entry as a sponsor. He turned out being the star of the show, but you will have to watch it to find out why!.. (he has since withdrawn from the GGR! Maybe because of this.) The series will come to Australia, but not sure when. What I can tell you is that it was quite a success in the UK.

*continued next page...*



***Chris Jacks on the Bow of the Bounty Boat replica, waving while the other crew row one day before final departure. The final outcome was a surprise to everyone, including Jane and I, but it makes for great Television! The free board was raised for OH&S safety reasons. BILGH would have cringed!***

## **Shane Freeman knocked down, dis-masted and *MUSHKA* abandoned**

Sometimes in the middle of a gale at sea I think of people snuggled up at home in bed with clean sheets dreaming. If I see a plane overhead while I am wet and miserable on the ocean I imagine inflight movies, meals and the speedy passage for those lucky punters up there.

Little did I know that while doing just that with Qantas heading to Hong Kong after the Wooden Boat Festival my friend and 2018 Golden Globe Race entrant Shane Freeman was in a life-threatening situation deep in the Southern Ocean. When I turned my emails on a day later he had tried to email me from his damaged yacht.

He was forced to abandoned his *MUSHKA* whilst attempting to sail solo around Cape Horn on his delivery voyage to England and the start of the Race in 2018. He was approx. 300 miles from the Chilean coast at the time.

Shane was making slow progress from Melbourne and had been at sea for nearly 68 days when he experienced a severe knockdown that dis-masted his yacht. This was the final blow that ended a run of smaller issues, ultimately leading Shane to make the hard decision to get off. He was recovered by a passing Chinese ship.



*continued next page...*

***"MUSHKA" Dismasted and disabled in the Southern Ocean***

### The EVENTS:

Shane had suffered a Knee injury a few days before the knockdown which was painful, black and purple. On the day of the knockdown winds were 25-45kts. LOG: Feb 18, 0340 UTC; LAT:51'45"S LONG: 85'04"W Shane was knocked down. IT was blowing 35-40kts W/SW...NOT huge seas just typical Southern Ocean.

He had been hand steering all day. Two weeks before his windvane steering failed as the mounting frame was bent up 40 degrees as a result of his drogue bridle streaming astern hooking the mountings and causing irreparable damage that could not be fixed at sea.

Before going below that day he had set the boat up to sail itself slowly with just a storm jib, sailing about 150-160 true heading down to round Cape Horn. Waves had filled the cockpit three times that day.

He went below and had cooked a meal...About two hours later he was putting things into a locker and then about to get into his bunk he heard the

loud roar of a *BIG* breaking wave and braced himself. His world went upside down in chaos. He was not sure if he rolled over 360, but thinks it was just a severe inverted knock down to 140-170 degrees? Very little water came below.

On deck the mast section had simply collapsed, as all chainplates and rigging were intact with no breakages of wire or fitting failures, yet the mast section was in two pieces. The top section in the water about 4-5 metres out from the boat on wire ...the bottom section laying partially on deck, with the boom in the cockpit still held by the mainsheet.

It took 5 hours to clear everything away to stop damage to the hull, saving the boom for a possible jury rig. The mast took out all stanchions and wires and he had two spinnaker poles on deck secure.

His Knee was aggravated and hurting; the life-raft canister and life-raft itself appeared damaged. Shanes support crew in Australia had advised all relevant authorities and Chile advised them that two ships were close by...

***The most dangerous part of the whole exercise..getting off..with sea cocks now open and the boat sinking. The Captain of the Chinese ship did a superb job and a para anchor off the bow on this occasion worked a treat holding the bow steady. But it was still a nightmare getting to and then up the ladder.***



*continued next page...*

## OCEAN ADVENTURE!

Shane then continued to assess jury rig options, no windvane, no solar panels, not enough power for effective use of electric wheel pilot (wind generator damaged in NZ)..and decided risks were mounting and after about six hours deliberation, concluded the sensible thing to do was accept a pick up from one ship , now only a few hours away.

Chile launched an aircraft to confirm his position. To continue he had 600 miles to make to port along a potentially dangerous lee shore. This was now a planned abandonment from that point on, rather than a full rescue. He was impressed with all the support given to affect his recovery. Sea cocks were opened to sink the boat as Shane evacuated it.

Shane's satellite phone gave effective communications and his support team in Melbourne handled all procedures well. The Captain and crew of the Chinese flagged Bulk Carrier *Frontier Ambition* did an excellent job allowing Shane, with some difficulty, to effectively step off dry after passing some bags on board. MRCC New Zealand and Chile co-ordinated the evacuation very well.

Sadly, Shane lost his ship's logs and most personal gear, but managed to save his

video footage. You can find all the details with lessons learned and watch his great video Blogs at [www.Freemansailing.com](http://www.Freemansailing.com) I asked Shane for a comment two days ago.

SHANE: "I have been back in Melbourne now for 4 weeks. I still have some residual swelling in my knee, but have pretty much full mobility. The mental adjustment has been more challenging (I am meant to be in the Southern Atlantic right now!).

I have been back on the water and will be assisting another GGR 2018 to reposition his boat around the Australian coast over the coming month. With huge regret, I won't be competing in the GGR 2018 race. To prepare another boat would require 9- 12 months of work, and I just don't have that in me. Let's see about the GGR 2022 event".

As they say in the classics...you can have the best prepared boat and the most experienced crew...but just sometimes luck plays a part. Let's hope we see Shane sail again in the 2022 GGR and if you wonder why I may say that, you need to read his blogs and watch those videos...I reckon he may have some unfinished business!..

**Good Luck Shane!**



**Happy snaps with the rescuing crew. A great relief.**

### A New Home, a new Life!

The start of any new journey brings a sense of expectation and excitement and none more so than for Jane and me right now. We have been playing in Tonga for the past seven years, but now it is all changing. Thanks to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Tonga we have our beautiful island Nomuka IKI and finally start building our little beach house in July. Tonga is now officially our new home!

I am Commodore of the Royal Nomuka Yacht Club based on our island and we start building the first four Puddle Duck Racers this year with big plans for the future of Vaka sailing in Tonga.

The McIntyre Adventure Marine Discovery Centre is now established on the island and we start construction of the first building this year. Strong links are currently being formed with key International Research Institutes and Universities with Coral Reef and Marine Diversity themed joint activities starting this year.

We plan to re-establish the plundered Sandalwood forest on the island with a Royal Sandalwood Plantation and set up a Clam Farm on surrounding reefs. If you have ever dreamt of swimming with whales, you can join us on our Lagoon 450 EXPLORER [www.whalesailtonga.com](http://www.whalesailtonga.com) or camp on the beach and swim out to them.

The fantastic anchorage between Nomuka and our island Nomuka IKI is linked to Captain Cook, William Mariner and is where the Mutiny on the Bounty took place. Our front door is always open, so when you are planning your next Pacific Voyage....Remember!!

Don and Jane are hanging out on Nomuka IKI with a bunch of fun volunteers helping out and we would love to see you. It is a people place and you are all welcome. Hope to see you soon!



**Jane and Don began their close involvement with the Kingdom of Tonga treasure hunting. Now it is their new home.**

# The Art of Adventure

**Create mental pictures of your goals  
Then work to make those pictures become realities**

**Exercise your god given right to choose your own direction  
And influence your own destiny and try to choose wisely and well**

**Have the daring to open doors to new experiences  
And step boldly forth to explore strange horizons**

**Be unafraid of new ideas, theories and new philosophies  
Have the curiosities to experiment, to test and try new ways of living and thinking**

**Recognise the only ceiling life has, is the one you give it  
And come to realise that you are surrounded by infinite possibilities for growth and achievement**

**Keep your heart young and your expectations high  
And never allow your dreams to die**

**By Wilfred A. Peterson**

*Given to Don by his mother "Betty"  
on his 21st birthday.*

*The world is looking a bit crazy these days.  
A good time to call Nomuka IKI in the  
Kingdom of Tonga our new uninhabited  
Island home.*



**Notice to contributors:** All contributions that purport facts in a matter of possible contention, should be ready to provide support for their assertions 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 provide support for their assertions. Personal attacks will not be published and rude or offensive mail will not get a response.

## Marine Safety Queensland (MSQ) Backdown!

To TCP Readers,

### Update on tender legislation August 2016

MSQ has changed their rules which came into force in August.

It appears that for some reason they have dropped the changes which they insisted were necessary for all tenders.

I believe that pressure from the public has forced MSQ to drop these changes which would of made it illegal for Tenders to be used for fishing or sightseeing.

MSQ have also changed the advisory memo on Tenders on their web site, by removing the no fishing and no sightseeing requirement and including:

*"Tenders can only be used to transport people or provisions between the ship and shore or ship to ship."*

This is for Tenders using MSQ legislation by having printed on tender, (TENDER TO Rego number) and can only be used within 2Nm of vessel.

So now it is still up to the public if hounded by authorities, to insist that you are catching provisions when fishing, or landing on a different beach or shore when sightseeing. (inside the 2 Nm distance)

I have still been told that some Government agencies are still threatening the public for not having life jackets in their Tenders. This is not a requirement in

legislation for normal Tenders but is in legislation for registered Tenders. Make sure that you tell the offending officer to read the legislation properly.

But after saying this I still carry life jackets when I feel that the conditions require it and it is still a good idea.

**Happy sailing and motoring,  
Peter Kerr MV Makin Tracks**

**TCP note:** a brief look at the latest regulation-tomsa current as of 24 2 17, could not find anything regarding the **use** of a tender for recreational craft. TCP would (non-professionally) advise if asked what you are doing with your tender by an enforcement agent is to respond , "legal purposes".

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### LACK OF SURVEY UPDATE

**Dear The Coastal Passage,**

Sadly I have to put in print that I have proof that the charter vessels in the Whitsundays are being ignored by Authorities in relation to Compliance with survey standards. This could cause loss of life. On the reverse side, we the cruising public are being targeted for compliance.

I build Survey vessels in Queensland so have a small understanding of the legislation and standards we are supposed to respect.

*continued next page...*

## LACK OF SURVEY UPDATE *continues...*

This started with a letter I sent to all Government agencies in the Whitsundays 4 years ago. This letter advised of many charter vessels not complying with strict survey standards in the Whitsundays, this included Government (Gov) vessels. Best offender of non survey handrails.

MSQ was the only agency to reply, with the promise to rectify the issues. The Fishery patrol vessel fixed the non compliance problem - on their own boat. Water Police seemd to have ripped up my letter. I thought fair enough, what do you expect from Gov. agencies but things might improve.

But my next cruise in the Whitsundays 3 years (2015) later found more issues and one of the most obvious issue, a 15M charter cat which ties up next to the slipway at Cannonvale still has no lifelines across the bow. It lays right next to all the Government Vessels. It is not the only vessel with no or below standard life lines in the charter fleet. In 3 years the Gov officers hadn't even bothered to notify the cat in question to fix there handrails.

Next, I was filling up with water at the public pontoon at Cannonvale and I noticed a 12M? high speed charter passenger ferry come in and tie up at the fuel pontoon. It still had maybe 20 passengers still in their seats. It proceeded to refuel with petrol for it's outboards, dragging the fuel hose between the passengers. I was just before 9am. They picked up passengers at the marina then fuelled up and then on it's way out to Whitehaven Beach.

I didn't do anything about this until a month later I did the same refilling with

water, and the same vessel did the same thing, refuelling with petrol and dragging the fuel hose between the passengers in their seats.

This I reported the next day to the Water Police at Cannonvale. The officer refused to take notes and suggested that they would look into my complaint. He also advised that he knew who I was and that he had ripped up my letter 3 years earlier. And had my address and phone number on file. *(TCP note: Unbelievable! A clear threat of retribution... Gangsterism?)* Fair enough. They did ring back to advise that the vessel had only just come into the fleet 6 months earlier and had been doing this activity of refuelling with petrol often. Police advised that if the activity happens again they would have their licence removed and the refuelling business would have their licence to sell fuel removed. So yes, they agreed that this activity was a serious incident and could have meant that 20 members of the tourist public could have been instantly burnt. No prosecutions were imposed.

During the same Whitsunday cruise we took shelter in Tongue Bay to wait for a 30+knot change. Of course it came in at 2 in the morning with a bang and hard rain. As usual I had a look for any dragging boats - only 2, with 1 stopping quickly but the other didn't stop. Skipper up anchored with difficulty and motored back to reset anchor.

This continued all night till sun up when we could see that the boat was a 12M Seawind charter cat which we knew from yesterday had a young family with 3 very small children. Next time that they came close to us our anchor bridle broke, so I waved to the skipper to follow us into shallow water.

*continued next page...*

## **LACK OF SURVEY UPDATE** *continues...*

We up anchored and they followed. We reset our anchor, the skipper motored close to advise of his distress, so I launched our dingy said goodbye to my wife as I guessed that I would not be able to return with the high winds and fng rough seas (yes in Tongue Bay).

On boarding the cat the skipper was very distressed as he had no idea how to stop his cat from dragging anchor. He had been trying for 4 hours and had been close to the rocky lee shore many times. He also advised that the anchor winch was broken, so we had to retrieve anchor by hand which was to my surprise easy (the anchor came in like there was nothing on the chain).

On landing the anchor all was revealed; the Plow anchor had 1 fluke completely rusted away and the other fluke was half gone.

I took the charter cat into shallow water to help with anchoring, put over the rusted anchor, then the small spare plow anchor on board, which only held with motors running in forward. In half an hour the anchor's set and we could stop motors.

After a few hours the weather got better so I went back to our vessel. I informed the skipper that the charter company will blame him for his troubles so stand your ground and tell them what you want. You yachties know this. Of course the charter company refused to agree that the anchor was faulty until I came on the radio to advise their error and lack of maintenance.

The cat finally went to Hamilton Island for repairs where many cruising yachties came to view the rusty anchor and take many photos.

You might think that dragging anchor is not a big deal. I can assure you that if you go up on the rocks in 30knots you might not save all your family especially the 3 very small children.

I asked myself how does an anchor rust away quickly and how does a anchor winch fail? Probably cheap imported from china and the winch is being used continually as the anchor doesn't set. I would expect an anchor to take many years to rust away. It was so bad I wouldn't of put in my garden.

To be fair let's say it took 1 year to rust. So this charter boat had been sent to sea without an anchor for up to 1 year. My main plough anchor is 9 years old, is in the water all the time and has no rust.

MSQ states in many of it's memo's that if it (anything) is faulty or out of date it doesn't exist and we will be prosecuted for non compliance of legislation. This boat should have had 50 prosecutions.

The next week when I was at Airlie I attended the MSQ office and put in a Marine Incident Report. The officer sounded like he was concerned and asked to photo copy my log book with the whole incident in it. It appears I was set up.

*continued next page...*

## LACK OF SURVEY UPDATE *continues...*

The skipper of the charter boat (tourist) who I had kept in touch with filed another Marine Incident Report via Email in Brisbane.

On returning back to my home port October 2015 I sent a another Email (emails can't be ripped up) to MSQ advising that the charter vessels are still not complying with the Queensland and now federal laws dating back 4 years now.

MSQ response, (after one month) was they had no record of my or the skippers Marine Incident reports. I then asked where are these Marine Incident reports as they are legal documents and can't be destroyed.

There response was that the charter fleet in Queensland and the Whitsunday are self regulating and have "a proven history of having less incidents that the private vessels in Queensland". They would not do anything as there was no marine incident reports to act on but stressed that they rely on my input and other skippers sending in reports to advance the safety of all boating.

Now the Legislation for charter (domestic charter vessels) is being handed over to AMSA and MSQ is responsible for upholding the Law supposable now.

I have just been told by MSQ that this is still in limbo as it is too hard for the transition and might take more years for AMSA to take full responsibility for domestic charter vessels.

### So the bottom line:

The private vessels are being intimidated and prosecuted for anything, just to keep the odds in the favour of domestic charter vessels.

The charter vessels are allowed to get away anything as they are self regulating and who is going to put themselves in to MSQ.

The Tourists on board many charter vessels are not being supplied with properly equipped vessels. Tourists are being sent out on vessels with the barest of experience to handle there vessels.

*continued next page...*

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## LACK OF SURVEY UPDATE *continues...*

We have to have a marine licence which gives the Gov officers the right to prosecute you.

MSQ and AMSA are not doing their job of protecting the tourist on charter vessels, and by default allowing imported vessels to be used in Australia charter industry with questionable vessels. Government agencies don't allow these vessels in Gov fleets. This could include the loss of life on a charter vessel which capsized a few years ago, through lack of responsibility by Gov agencies.

To cover their responsibility:

MSQ has asked me and all other skippers to send in reports when they see violations, or marine incidents. Make them do their job and make sure that the report is a approved marine incident form. I quite enjoy making the bastards do their job!

**Happy sailing and motoring.  
Peter Kerr, MV Makin Tracks**

**Hi Peter,**

*The more you know of the agency's history, the more one studies and examines the complaints against it, the more bizarre it appears.*

**Thanks again Peter. We need more fighters like you out there!**

**Bob**

# MARINE INSURANCE

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**Hi Bob,**

Saw the latest TCP... Good stuff.

I noticed you mention that the charting software you used was out by a couple of hundred meters. I wonder if that is because the software is set to the wrong Datum? AGD66 (???) and WGS84 differ by about that much. The GPS uses WGS. The difference is something like 0.09 minutes south and 0.06 minutes west. Don't quote me on this as it has been a long time since I needed the info. but the result is a 200 or 300 meter difference.

If you end up in Malaysian waters on the Gulf of Thailand side then may I suggest Terengannu? The fisherman's wharf there that is positioned accurately on my venerable C-Map (5 degrees 20.8 minutes N, 103 degrees 08.2 minutes S) to within a few meters. I was may still be - the only place that allows diesel to be sold to boats.

The attractions of Terengganu are that:

It is a very safe anchorage.

A very safe place to visit.

It has very polite and friendly customs and immigration (I wish our Border Force could study manners and attitudes here).

A big town with many transport options that would allow you to leave your boat safely and do the touristy thing.

It has a mechanic that is very good and very honest. Ask for Ali Pomenn at the fishermen's wharf, he has a workshop there. He is a diesel expert as well

as electrical. Ali Pomenn can arrange security for the boat that would cost about \$100 per month.

It has the thousand year old timber shipbuilding industry that still builds in timber *and* can build them to size for transport by container.

A great museum.

Day trips to the mountains.

Chandlery and hardware.

In short, everything a cruising sailor needs.

**All the best on your voyage,**

**Cheers,**

**Julius**

*Hi Julius,*

*Yes, I have thought about the datum issue and assume that is it do the relative consistency of the error. But i don't know how to correct it in my opencpn so have just lived with it.*

*Thanks for the tip on Terengganu!*

*Still hanging around the Philippines.*

*I notice my charts are spot on here. It was just Indonesia so far.*

**Cheers,**

**Bob**



# Sailor pleads for justice from government... WHAT WAS HE THINKING?! WHAT DO YOU THINK?

***Last issue of TCP (#82) John Nichols wrote an account of his horror voyage from New Caledonia to Australia and his even more horrible treatment from customs upon his arrival.***

***Due to contaminated fuel and vicious weather John preferred the quick relief and direct observation of rescue authorities of the Gold Coast Seaway at the channel over the prolonged dangers of shoals in the Moreton Bay entry for Brisbane. Their engine was not reliable for any length of time.***

***He contacted Customs/ABF to inform them of his situation and believed he had their acknowledgement and approval to make the change due to safety concerns.***

***The following is an update. Johns letter to the Minister, the reply, Johns letter to TCP and a bit more comment.***

***If you did not read his account in TCP 82, you should download that edition and have a read. TCP asks readers to send in their comments on this issue.***

**get in touch by email at [bob@thecoastalpassage.com](mailto:bob@thecoastalpassage.com)**

**Hi Bob,**

As I stated in the TCP article I sent a comprehensive (ie ALL the documentation, reports, etc etc) submission to The Minister. I have enclosed a copy.

Yesterday I received a reply. See attached my submission and reply. The audacity is breath taking, and is not quite what I had in mind in my final remarks to the minister.

---

## JOHNS LETTER TO THE MINISTER

**Feb 28, 2017**

**Hon. Peter Dutton, MP  
Minister for Immigration and  
Border Protection**

**Dear Peter,**

**Re: Implementation of Subsection 60(1)  
of the Customs Act 1901 by the Australian  
Border Force and its effect on sea safety.**

On 7 July, 2016 I returned to Australia, on my sailing vessel, from Noumea, New Caledonia. On

I remarked to a friend, 'I'm not sure whether I'm part of an episode of that well known documentary series, 'Yes Minister', or in the sequel to 'Ground Hog Day'. What part of 'independent' don't they understand. ....lets press on into the valley of darkness!!!!!!

I have started to prepare a reply and will share it with you when complete.

**Regards,**

**John Nichols, SY Orient Express**

that voyage the vessel experienced some serious mechanical problems, and to make matters worse, I was also subjected to a very severe storm off the Australian coast.

The documents I have enclosed go into the details of these events, the subsequent action taken by the ABF and my actions in reply.

I am writing to you as I believe that I have been grossly unfairly treated in this matter and as you are my elected representative and ultimately responsible for the actions of the ABF.

*continued next page...*

## **JOHNS LETTER TO THE MINISTER** *continues...*

I would respectfully request that you examine all the aspects of my case. If you believe that I have been treated fairly, as you would expect to be treated yourself, then I would very much appreciate your reasoning for arriving at that conclusion.

In reply to the issuance of an infringement notice by the ABF I wrote three reports in total that not only explained the true situation in detail but also asked a number of questions seeking clarification. Those questions have never been addressed or answered.

This treatment is just pathetically appalling and one must therefore conclude that those personnel who carried out the reviews either did not have the answers or had little if any appreciation or experience of blue water sailing and its potential hazards.

The very last thing I wanted when I was in trouble was to “inconvenience” others, especially any of our rescue services. I believe that I achieved this by the actions that I chose to take.

The belief that I had the ABF's approval to carry out those actions unhindered was pivotal in that decision making process.

This is a matter that has potentially some very serious sea safety issues, not the least of which includes your government's responsibilities under the international SOLAS agreement. You may wish to consider whether your department's actions have compromised the terms or intent of that agreement.

What has enraged me is that after having suffered mechanical problems with the vessel in the middle of the Coral Sea, contending with an extremely severe coastal storm AND believing that I had permission from the ABF to land at Southport, I was virtually treated as a criminal on arrival in my own country and received a very hefty fine to add to my troubles.

The infringement notice issued by ABF states that I was in breach of Part IV; Division 2; Subsection 60(1) of the Customs Act 1901, a section, if implemented, has no defence at all; ie. it is a “strict liability” offence.

There is however a defence to 60(1) afforded to aircraft under Subsection 60(4) which seems to be totally discriminatory and inequitable. Why only aircraft? Furthermore, Subsection 58(1), again contained within Part IV, also has the same exclusion provision for “stress of weather or other reasonable cause”. Maybe both these sections of the Act need closer scrutiny and review.

To warn others of the “uncompromising” attitude of the ABF, and its cavalier approach to sea safety issues, I wrote an article for “The Coastal Passage” on-line magazine, that has a circulation of over 100,000. A copy of that article accompanies this submission. The editor of that publication is a highly respected and experienced sailor so his footnote comments should not be ignored. Reading this article will give you an overview of the events of the voyage and the subsequent actions taken by the ABF.

I have spoken to a many people since the event and the publication of “The Coastal Passage” article. ALL have agreed with me and supported the actions I had taken. More details, emails with ABF, and other supporting evidence are contained within the reports to your department, as mentioned above, and are enclosed.

I would very much appreciate it if you, or some truly independent entity, could investigate this matter.

**Yours faithfully,  
John Nichols**

*continued next page...*



## JOHNS REPLY LETTER FROM THE MINISTER'S "REPRESENTATIVE" AT AUSTRALIAN BORDER FORCE

**Mr John Nichols**  
**15 Meig Place**  
**Marayong NSW 2148**

**Dear MrNichols**

Thank you for your letter of 28 February 2017 to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, the Hon Peter Dutton MP concerning Infringement Notice action taken by Australian Border Force officers following your arrival by yacht to Australia on 7 July 2016. The Minister appreciates the time you have taken to bring this matter to his attention and has asked that I reply on his behalf.

The Australian Border Force (ABF) takes seriously comments it receives relating to the performance of its officers, functions, processes and responsibilities. As such the circumstances leading to the issue of and subsequent withdrawal request for Infringement Notice 103162 have been investigated and I can provide the following information.

On 2 August 2016 you were issued with Infringement Notice 103162 in accordance with Division 2 of Part 15 of the Customs Regulations 2015 for contravention of Subsection 60(1) of the Customs Act 1901- failing to bring the vessel to a boarding station. Following the issue of the Infringement Notice you requested consideration for withdrawal of the Infringement Notice on three separate occasions being 24 August 2016, 13 October 2016 and 14 November 2016 respectively. For each request for withdrawal, an independent Delegate examined the additional information you provided to support your claim for withdrawal. In all cases, the Delegate upheld the original decision to issue the Infringement Notice in contravention of Subsection 60(1) of the Customs Act 1901.

I appreciate that you are dissatisfied with the outcomes of your withdrawal requests however all information provided has been thoroughly examined and

considered leading to the conclusion that an offence occurred under Subsection 60(1) of the Customs Act 1901 and the decision to uphold the original Infringement Notice.

**Thank you for your correspondence to the Minister.**

**Yours sincerely**

**Sue Hines**  
**A/g Chief of Staff**  
**Regional Command Queensland**  
**22 March 2017**

### **A COMMENT ON Part IV; Division 2; Subsection 60(1) & Subsection 60(4) of the Customs Act 1901:**

*It is obviously bad law and perhaps by intent, this is evidenced by the aviation exception.*

*They (government) know that conditions may require a last minute change of plan for safety but chose aviation as a beneficiary and not yachts. They can't claim they didn't know an exception was needed at times.*

*In recent past (TCP#35 page 12) it was known that yachts could deviate from planned entry point due to contrary wind conditions as that is the main source of power but this law, obviously a recent change in the law itself or the enforcement of it, refutes that. Why make such a change? Why compel yachts to life threatening practises when aircraft, that are much less affected by adverse weather, may divert their path?*

## More from John Nichols

***John Nichols learns about his fuel contamination problems.***

*(See TCP 82 for Johns story on his crossing from New Caledonia to Australia)*

**Hi Bob,**

A week or so after the Southport incident my crewman flew to Tonga via Fiji. During his stay in Fiji he related our story to the marina manager at Vuda. The manager said that another skipper had reported a water in fuel contamination problem about the same time that we refuelled.

The fuel concession at Vuda is held by a separate company, which, I guess possibly explains the 'freedom of information'.

Now at last it all seems to make some sense. The aft tank(that I transferred fuel from) was the last to be filled in Fiji and was the most contaminated - that fits.

**Regards,  
John,  
SY Orient Express**

## A Young and Salty Sailing Blog

**Dear readers,**

What's the best way to get aboard and go sailing?

A tidal wave is building as a new sailing blog is gaining momentum. Launched in early February, <http://youngandsalty.com> is already taking off with its primary audience: millennials who are sailors or who are intrigued by sailing...or the idea of living aboard...or racing...or sailing around the world. The dream comes in many sizes and <http://youngandsalty.com> shows that a sailboat and the sailing life are affordable.

<http://youngandsalty.com> isn't just for millennials. New and wannabe sailors will find something of interest too. Site founders and bloggers Fiona McGlynn and her partner Robin Urquhart focus on getting anyone and everyone out on the water, no matter how tight their budget.

Read "10 Ways to Go Sailing for Under \$100 a Month" or "What Does a Boat Cost to Own?" When you're ready, you'll no doubt enjoy "Choosing the Right Boat" or "The Five Best Places to Buy a Used Boat."

**Supplied by Good old Boat Magazine:  
[www.goodoldboat.com](http://www.goodoldboat.com)**

# The TCP "Issues" Issue

**This is a collection of articles from TCP #15 to #57 that illustrates the advocacy and educational thrust of the paper's content. This is by no means an exhaustive or complete assemblage. It is a sampling and reference to the high points.**

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## A letter to Bob Wed, March 29, 2017, from Kay

By now you may have had time to see the latest news about Cyclone Debbie but just in case... Hamilton Island recorded 263mph winds. The whole of Whitsundays and north to Townsville *and* south to Mackay are a "catastrophe". Many, many boats are damaged. That cyclone moved slow and strong. Many reporters stayed there (and are still there) stationed around the towns, so beginning Monday night and especially Tuesday they had the cyclone live all day. Unusual for a cyclone to hit during the day. I was rivetted - probably good that I had to leave and get supplies. Today as well there is lots of news on the cyclone on most TV stations and online news.

They filmed the Abel Point Marina as some reporters were staying in the hotel and filmed the boats breaking away from the moorings and smashing against the rock wall inside. Shute Harbour was in the eye so a mess there. I don't know about the new marina. A reporter at Mackay Marina was filming the waves coming over the rock wall. I don't think much damage there though.

One reporter interviewed the couple that own the seafood place in Bowen where the trawlers unload. Their roof blew off and it was a mess. An emotional interview...the reporter, a big blonde guy (that spent the day before out by the wharf on the foreshore when it hit) got emotional as well and turned the story to another reporter before he probably fell apart.

They drove around town today and the roads and foreshore were littered with trees, down, many snapped in half, etc...you know, like you witnessed from Cyclone Larry...but weird to see it hit 3 towns at one go: Bowen, Airlie Beach, Mackay, then Proserpine, Collinsville and everywhere in between.

I heard that cyclones can cool down oceans so they can actually help slow down the coral bleaching. Is this one way mother nature is taking care of her own? And a pay back for all us stupid humans that are so complacent?

So now Debbie is a nasty low (its Wednesday late afternoon) and heading this way. I am using my knowledge as a boatie living aboard and seem to have my preparations in order for a possible week or more being stranded with no power or ... wait! I forgot about getting extra water! I have some but not enough for 2 weeks... So I now have all the sinks and buckets filled (wow, that laundry tub holds a lot of water!) and if I had a bathtub... or Marty's Rain Snare...

They predict a lot of wind flooding and today very windy and it poured in spurts. Thunder in the distance. Hopefully it will not blow out electricity. If it does I may have trouble getting TCP done in time, so if you don't hear from me next few days that would probably be why. Memories of 2010 - 2013 storms happening again but I feel this time it is much more destructive than the last ones.

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There is excellent storage and plenty of working counter space in the galley. Storage lockers and under deck shelves in the saloon have hinged locking doors. Even a wine locker under the table.

Two private cabins with double beds and hanging lockers.

Very well thought out and engineered, these boats handle easily, are stable and responsive to the helm, and are a delight to sail. CE "A" class rated for 6 in offshore or blue water sailing.

*Ask for more details and photo's.*

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# DELPHIA YACHTS and POWERBOATS



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Three double bed cabins, spacious saloon/galley, Corian benchtops and much more.

This well equipped boat *has* to be the best value for money boat of its type available.

*Ask for more details and photos!*

## TOWNSVILLE SLIPWAYS BOATSALES

The logo for Delphia Authorized Dealer features a stylized white 'D' on a dark blue background. To the right of the 'D', the word 'DELPHIA' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below 'DELPHIA', the words 'AUTHORIZED DEALER' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

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# About Filipinos and the Philippines

Story & photos by Bob Norson, *SC BareBones*

I find the best part of travel is being surprised... by the landscape... by the seascape.. by the people.

I am not an authority on local culture but maybe have some insights that are useful. Here are some random observations.

I have only been here in the Philippines for a few months and have only been in a couple of areas of a country that is spread over hundreds of islands and includes numerous cultures and languages / dialects. But as far south as Davao and as far north as Manila it is apparent that English and Filipino, a derivative of Tagalog, share as lingua franca. In between those places, maybe not so much. The written language is in Latin alphabet except for a few southern islands where Arabic predominates.

Driving down a main street in the city virtually all the signs you see are in English. Everything from "do not park in front of driveway" on a gate to huge billboards advertising fashion apparel. If you turn off into a side street signs may often be in local language but there will always be some English.

*continued next page...*



**This very flash stainless steel Jeepney can carry passengers or freight and since this is Chinatown, it is freight.**

## About Filipinos and the Philippines

Spanish as a common language has faded away in spite of a 300 year tenure but the church the Spaniards brought with them has stayed and is still very strong. Divorce is almost impossible. The only way to do it is to convert to Islam and go before a Muslim judge. This is a hot topic of conversation in a fleet of yachties, mostly older and many single, until they came to the Philippines where they met ladies trapped in rotten marriages or those who were already free. The local ladies are generally hard working, honest and dedicated to their new husbands.

When Kay came to visit me here, she was impressed immediately with the Filipino sense of pride. Nothing wrong with that. I would add secure. Free of a feeling of inferiority that can make some groups tend to meanness. But Filipinos are just people. There are no shortages of vice here. But sometimes the ratio and balance surprises.

For instance, ambition: California hospitals are filled with Filipino nurses and a relative of mine complained at first as they made it harder for a non-Filipino to advance through their near monopoly of the ranks, but she eventually made it and had to admit they were damn good. And it is a good bet that almost all of those nurses were supporting family in the Philippines and that those family members avoided work because they didn't have to. Remittances from foreign workers is a major part of the economy. I see men that live in a shack that can be built in a week and even with the low wage they could do a lot more but why should they? They have a motorbike that their sister working in Australia paid for, he can go into town and hire himself out giving rides to and fro and in a day make enough to keep him and his brood in rice and him in Tanduay Rhum for a while.

So Philippines isn't short of ambition, it's just concentrated in earners more than what I call normal and absent in the rest more than normal but hey... everyone is happy.

*continued next page...*



**Talk about pride, this guy has really worked on his trike to make it dazzling and impressive. Note the religious messages.**

## About Filipinos and the Philippines



**Any doubt you are in Asia?!  
Even the school bus is powered  
by a 125CC motorbike. I think  
7 people fit into it. Asians love  
stainless!**





**The largest selection of skateboards around. Not very clever merchandising.**

The independent stores can be very interesting. The mix of merchandise is very clever or a mile off target! In a store on Samal Island I found a large display of skateboards. Problem is there are no smooth footpaths to use them on. The footpaths belong to the property owners that they are on and so they are a hodge podge of varying heights and finishes but usually all very rough to provide traction when wet and to hide crude workmanship! Their main use is to cover the storm and sewer drains that are underneath them. I have never seen a skateboard in use here. I can imagine the confusion of the young lad who gets one for Christmas, walking about with it



**The local village fashion shop.**

under his arm like he sees in American TV until he gets tired of it. Or worse, he actually tries to use it and then the investment in bandages exceeds the value of the board!

Security is the growth industry in this part of the Philippines. The malls, the banks, the supermarkets, anywhere people gather there will be a uniformed and sometimes armed private security officer inspecting and patting down every person who enters. Looking in every bag.

*continued next page...*

## About Filipinos and the Philippines

I remember a quote from a Chris Larsen book about the five years he spent living in Palawan, Philippines. He and his lady had just made some money so they went and bought a big bag of rice and "blew the rest". "We'd gone native," he exclaimed.

If you want to talk about local ambition you have to recognize the Chinese. Not some recent refugees but people that have lived in the Philippines for well over a hundred years. Chinatown in Davao is where merchandise turns at large volume and high speed. If you want to see the business end of Asia, get a face mask and come on down!

Tanduay Rhum! I needed to make change for a taxi so ran into the convenience store and looked for something that provided an excuse to break a 1000 P note. I bought a 750ml bottle of 5 year old, 80 proof rum for 100 P. That is less than \$3 AUD! And it is good! But later I found I got ripped off. It was only 74 P at the local supermarket, about \$2.05 AUD. That bottle could cost you around \$40 in Australia.

And fuel... Fuel was cheap in Indonesia but it is subsidized there but I don't think it is here. Kay reports that petrol and diesel are running about \$1.40 lately in Australia but it is under a dollar AU here. The Australian government and the oil companies will say the high price in Australia is due to the Singapore market blah blah blah... bullshit. Companies gouge Australians because they can and the government is happy to allow it because they get a cut; taxed by percentage.

Don't smoke in public here. You probably won't get shot for it but don't do it.

There is no economy of scale here. If you go into a drug store to buy rubber gloves or pain pills you will pay the same price per piece whether you buy a box of 100 or one. Yes, they will sell one rubber glove. Every glove in the box has a bar code sticker on it. And when you go to pay it will take three people to handle the transaction.

*continued next page...*



**This is where you go when you are cashed up. Buy a 50KG bag of rice and blow the rest! They also sell corn and other grains here.**



**All those bags are full of dried fish. You can get anything in Chinatown and lots of it.**



**You meet the nicest people at a birthday party! This was an all you can eat and drink place. People are friendly and courteous. My new girlfriend and her boyfriend were lovely company. Kay loved the desert counter.**

In spite of the danger from strangers, Filipinos are friendly. Kay and I celebrated my birthday at a restaurant that gave a free meal to the birthday person and the young woman next to us joined us for photos and smiles. We met her later; she was working at McDonalds flogging coffee to finance her education. She will probably wind up in a foreign country and sending back part of her pay every month.

I think Filipinos have a great sense of humour! Some people are uncomfortable about being photographed but most Filipinos will ham it up for you. Big Smiles!



**The Honest crowd at Hagimit Falls. And charming and friendly.**

While visiting the Hagimit waterfalls at Samal Island I apparently dropped a 100 P note while paying our entrance fee. The crew were waiting for us to show up on our return and offered up the bill. I think most Filipinos are honest but that goes with the pride thing doesn't it?

Because the language and access to familiar products make it so tempting, it is easy to make assumptions about how people are in context of those things but the fun is in looking closer. It is really Asia here but with enough western culture to make it so easy it can be missed at a glance. Asia for beginners!

*continued next page...*



The friendly crowd at Hagimit Falls.



Kay & Bob after a swim at Hagimit Falls



**This is a typical modest home. Done on a concrete slab or plank floor. The frame is local hardwood and the walls and windows are bamboo strips woven into patterns of varying density. Breeze can get through which is a good thing at only 7 degrees latitude. The roof is tin but there are a few palm thatched roofs around.**

*continued next page...*



***BareBones* resting easy at the Marina, lower centre.**



**Camp Holiday Resort near Babak has a massive resort with accommodation, restaurant and pool. The pool is free to use when you stay at the marina. It is located next to the ferry so when waiting for the bus to take you back to your boat, you can have a meal, drink and a swim.**

# A special offer from DG Marine

**DG Marine, Australian Distributors of Rolly Tasker Sails, are pleased to announce their campaign for the supply of custom made Screechers, Cruising Code Zeros and Heavy Weather Spinnakers.**

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**or visit our website**

**[www.dgmarine.com.au](http://www.dgmarine.com.au)**



**ROLLY TASKER SAILS**



# This sea pilot's lifejacket coat 'raises the bar'

The **SOS Sea Pilot's** high tech lifejacket is keeping it simple and 'bridging the gap' to improve an affordable lifejacket coat. This high-tech lifejacket is integrated into a coat by using a quick-burst zipper resulting with 275N of buoyancy. The life jacket inflates outside the coat making it simple to use by the wearer and more visibility for the rescuer.

The three-quarter length jacket is very comfortable and uses a "two-layer" barrier system within the lining. "It has two insulated pockets to keep your hands warm and a neoprene sleeves to stop water running up the sleeve" says spokesperson from Southern Seas Marine.

The SOS Sea Pilot lifejacket-coat is available at Southern Seas Marine website [www.southernseasmarine.com.au](http://www.southernseasmarine.com.au)



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# The Net

Story & photos by  
**John Nichols, SY Orient Express**

This tale is one of those, "It couldn't happen to me!" events.

With, USA skipper, Aaron, and crew, Jace and myself we set out from Sidney on Vancouver Island to deliver a Nordhavn 62 to Bundy. The route was Sidney, San Francisco, Honolulu, Funafuti, Port Vila and Bundaberg.

After leaving the excellent hospitality of St. Francis Yacht Club we headed for Honolulu.

We were about a bit over half way on a fine sunny day with a rolling one metre sea from astern. It was early afternoon, I was off watch and just sat down in the saloon to read, when, BOOM / BANG / BOOM, THEN nothing...no engine...nothing!

I opened the engine room door expecting to see rods, pistons, and an assembly of other spare parts decorating the engine room. To my surprise, nothing; just a quiet engine. As you can imagine, I checked everything (and quickly); gear box, shaft, coupling, mounts, everything.



Aaron and Jace rolling up net

The other two guys joined me and went over everything again....nothing.

Now standing on the aft deck with face mask and fins I dropped over the side to have a look. When I surfaced I said to the eager assembly, "We are f.....ed!, no, I mean really.....!"

What I saw was a blue/green cargo (possibly) net totally encapsulating the prop and shaft plus a good deal more just swirling around.

*continued next page...*



Jace in water in sawing position



Jace with modified bread knife

**These were the problems:**

1. Boat doesn't go.
2. Prop totally disabled.
3. The Nordhavn has a "get home engine", but if that was engaged there was a better than average chance that the swirling net would have fouled it.
4. We tried to breathe hold dive to cut the net free, no way.
5. There was no SCUBA on board.
6. We were too far out for a chopper to drop SCUBA equipment, a fixed wing drop would have been possibly ok, sort of.

We first tried diving and using a bread knife, but the time was too limited and the swirling net made the exercise a bit dangerous as well. Jace remembered that there was a very long aluminium boat hook. I remembered that I saw some PVC amalgamating tape. With those two items, together with the bread knife we had been unsuccessfully using thus far when diving, we fashioned a "long handled bread knife". possibly about 4m long.

We were able to lay in the water outside the sponson and place the blade along the prop shaft and sawed, and sawed and..... *continued next page...*

## The Net

The boat was rolling, of course, so some caution had to be exercised. We were able to get a line on the aft end of the net and pull some tension on it over the transom; that helped. We each rotated at about 15minute intervals and after 3hrs it was free.

In the fairly benign conditions a diver with a serious knife could have had the job done in half an hour or so. We bundled up the net, stowed it on the marlin board, and crossed our fingers. The bullet proof John Deere Luger engine started, gearbox engaged, no vibration.....we were off...PHEW!!!

The Aloha wharf at the Hawaiian Yacht Club was indeed a very welcome sight. As you can see from the photograph, taken on the wharf at the club, the amount of net was substantial, and very tough as well.

At the time of the incident there were two very experienced people on watch, it was early afternoon and we were travelling south west and the net was possibly under the surface. It would have been impossible to see.

Of course the whole thing could have happened at night and/or in bad weather...what a nightmare that would have been!

When you consider the surface area of the net and the surface area of the Pacific Ocean, the chances of hitting it you would think are small.....or are they?

*continued next page...*



**The Net on wharf at Hawaii Yacht Club**

## The Net

Leaving Honolulu, with a new fully functioning SCUBA (hooker) unit on board and a couple of very seriously big sharp knives, we set out for Funafuti (Tuvalu).

En route and a couple of days out from Honolulu we came across a long line fisherman. Calling him up on VHF to get some information on where his line was, buoys, depths, etc. we told him of our little adventure with the net. He said that possibly on two out of three trips he gets something caught around the prop.

"Either a net, a line, wire rope plus net plus line", he went on. To "quickly" solve these problems he had put two 'stirrups' under the deadwood near the prop for the diver to put his feet in whilst he cut, chiselled or sawed the obstruction off the prop. The diver also wore a bicycle helmet, for protection, as well, he said.

If there is a moral to the story it is be prepared for anything (?), situations can easily get very serious very quickly....even then??

The remainder of the voyage was relatively uneventful, just the usual maintenance /repair items, and a bit of bad weather in the Coral Sea...nothing new there! The boat is built like a brick outhouse and handled all the conditions very well.

*continued next page...*



**The boys having fun at Funafuti.  
From left, John, Aaron & Jace**

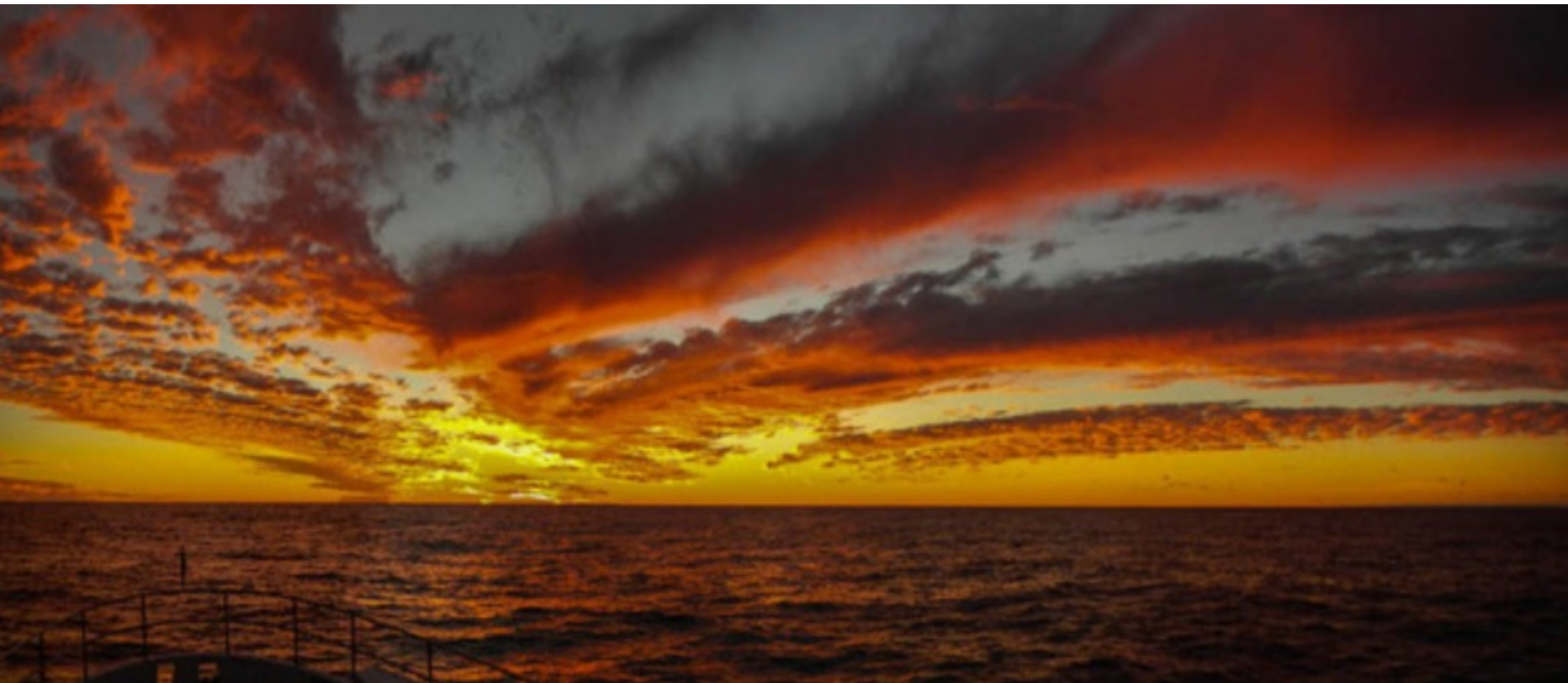
# Bee in Port Vila



**For the technically minded:**

"BEE" is a Nordhaven 62 (built 2008)  
Displacement: 72 ton (wet)  
Engine: John Deere, Lugger; 340HP Turbo  
Consumption: 19 L/Hr.  
Range: 3600Nm (plus 10% reserve)  
Ancillary Equip.: far too much to list!!

*continued next page...*



**The best Pacific Sunset ever!**

# My letter to Honda

By Bob Norson, SC BareBones

Dear Honda,

I am writing to complain about the quality of some of the design and parts on my pair of BF20D outboard motors.

But first I want you to understand that I am otherwise a long standing Honda fan. Having purchased and still own a CRV and have purchased six new Honda Motorcycles over the years along with several second hand. All of them were/are excellent.

I purchased the outboards with the intent of providing axillary power to my ocean going sailing catamaran but I think they should have been represented as fresh water motors exclusively. For example: all the brackets to support wiring etc in the engine are made of steel with some kind of painted coating on them to stall rusting by about 10 minutes. This is complicated by the fact the motor covers leak because the seal around the edge of the upper cover is simply not good enough. Also the lower side covers do not meet firmly aft so water sprays past their join easily. I did correct this by filing metal off the rear cover screw connector. I also coated the seal with lanolin which helped a great deal. Unfortunately I didn't do these things until I observed damage. How much more would it have cost Honda to stamp those parts out of Aluminium? Maybe as much as a dollar? They wouldn't have to have been painted. Maybe they would have cost less?

The biggest failure was the threaded tube that provided the pivot for the tilting motor. This 7/8 inch tube was coated with a finish that looked like unpolished stainless steel when in fact it was plain steel.

*continued next page...*



**This is what is under all the wiring harnesses that crawl from the front to back and over. Very hard to see without tearing the stuff apart. The anode, or what is left to it, is at the bottom, left hand corner. The spring at the top is part of the clever devise that allows you to hook up a fresh water hose directly to the motor. The anode was replaced. Notice the rusted steel brackets. I found upon re-assembly and starting the motors that it was necessary to remove the temperature sensor, start and let water flow out of it for a while, then stop the motors and replace. Otherwise the over heating buzzer actuated. After "bleeding" the system it was fine.**

## My letter to Honda

Because of their position and the large nuts on the ends it wasn't noticed how rusted they were until I probed under the hinge and chunks of rusted steel started falling into the motor pod. I have covered them with lanolin for now but it will take putting the boat on the hard and hiring a small crane to dismount them or find a couple of strong young fellows to man handle them off from a marina berth, hoping they don't drop it over the side in the process. Then I will have the proper stainless ones made at a local engineers shop for about what they would cost from one of your dealers for another set of the crap steel ones. This painful and expensive operation will cost much more than what you saved putting in the cheaper product.

The carburetors are far too precious for the job. Whose idea was it to bury a small jet in a passage deep under the float bowl where it could not be seen, let alone serviced without drilling through to the passage? Fire that man unless he has starving children. Let him push a broom somewhere in the factory. A job he may be qualified for.

*continued next page...*



**See that little speck of light in the dark hole on the right? That is a jet, a fuel metering orifice that was impossible to see until I cut a hole behind it to admit light. This was not mentioned in the workshop manual.**

**I only discovered it as a matter of speculation. There had to be something in there! I cleaned it out with the fine steel strand of a wire brush. I then covered the holes I had cut with Marine Tex, a fuel resistant epoxy.**



**This is what it looked like from the backside where I cut the hole. Who designed this?!!**



The water pump impellers are inferior. I had one break across the main body while in light duty and no rubbish in the system to cause it stress. The ends of the blades showed no wear yet it failed.

Fortunately this happened while in a marina, not at sea where over the noise of being underway I may not have noticed the weak little screech from the control box alerting me to the overheating motor. Who supplies these parts for Honda? Change suppliers.

I avoided a problem by listening to the advise of a professional mechanic who strongly suggested I remove every fastener exposed to water and coat it with lanolin. Without that advise I am sure I would have faced some agonising repairs while at sea. Drilling, extracting, re-tapping threads and replacing fasteners.

I am hoping that newer models may have some of these issues addressed. I still think well of Honda but when next I intend to purchase anything from you, I am afraid the decision won't be based on blind faith anymore. Please improve,

**Sincerely,  
Bob Norson**



**This was a very disappointing failure. It could have been catastrophic.**

# GOOD OLD BOAT



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# An excerpt from "Living in the 'Out Front' of Australia"

## When everything goes "wrong"

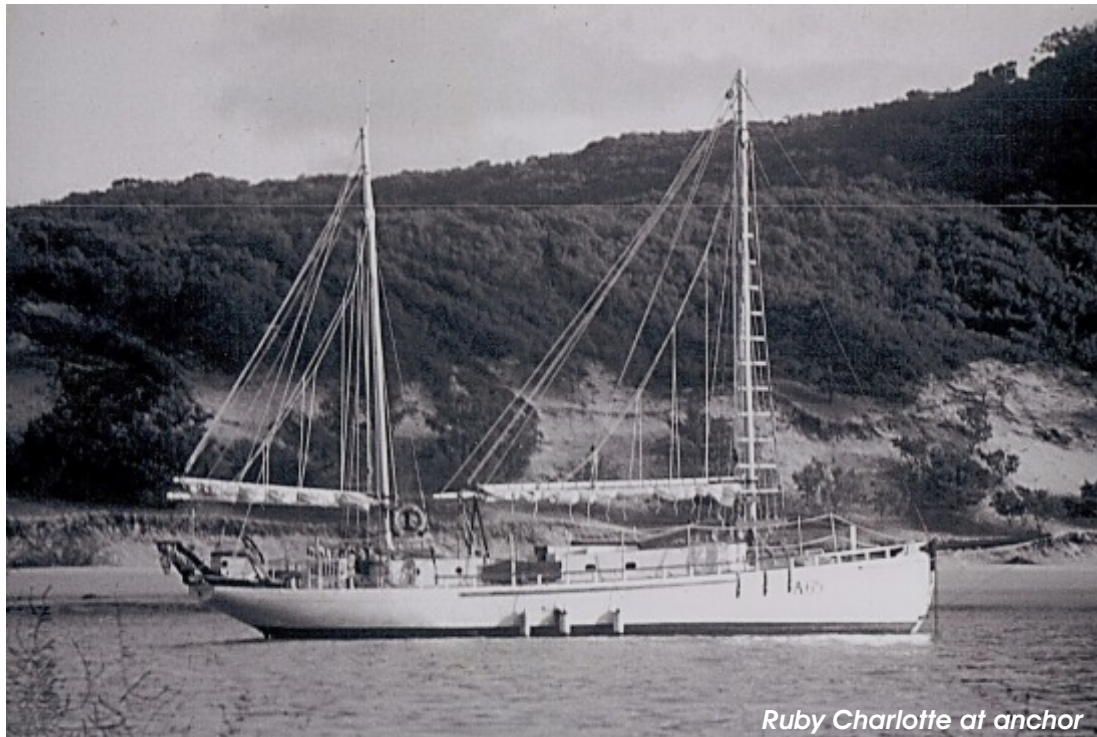
By Jon Hickling, SV *Ruby Charlotte*

In 1998 we had some friends come stay for a week. After their holiday we dropped them off at Marble Island on a calm spring day. The plane to take them back to the mainland was due at 2pm so Charlie and Gabrielle asked us ashore for a BBQ. I anchored *Ruby* on the southern side of the island after navigating the *Lola Montes* Pass - a narrow channel between nearby Hunter and Marble Island. This unique waterway was named by Flinders in 1802 after the Duke of Northumberland's mistress, a well-known actress and socialite!

An extensive fringing reef on the southern side prevented most boats from anchoring too close to the beach except on a high tide for a limited time. Charlie and Gabriel were great hosts, they gave us a guided tour of the island in a John Deere 'Gator' a six wheel all-terrain vehicle that the Banana Splits would have loved.

Back at the Homestead we settled down to an afternoon BBQ. The plane to pick up our friends was due in an hour so we had time to relax. The four seater plane soon came and went. Within minutes of waving goodbye a sudden wind change from the south west whisked through. *Ruby Charlotte* was anchored close to the reef but in reasonably deep water.

*continued next page...*



*Ruby Charlotte at anchor*

To anchor a vessel well it is good practice to put out at least 3 times the amount of chain to your depth of water. For example if in 10 metres of water you would put out 30 metres of anchor chain. The depth sounder had displayed 8 metres which meant I should let out 24 metres of chain, erring on the side of caution I let out 30 metres.

This was all well and good if the wind had stayed from the north keeping the anchored yacht well away from danger, but what happened was the change of wind caused *Ruby* to swing over the fringing reef where her keel lay hovering over 3 metres of water instead of 8!

While the tide was coming in this was ok, but unfortunately the tide was now ebbing and was racing out at a good pace. I checked on *Ruby* a few times and she looked ok.

The wind had dropped back to 10 knots, I didn't want to leave the BBQ and move the boat if I didn't have to, so going against my gut feeling I returned to be social.

I found I couldn't relax, my mind kept returning to the boat until I had to excuse myself and go do something about it. *Ruby's* tender was now almost high and dry and with great effort I managed to re-float it and begin paddling out to where *Ruby* was anchored some ½ mile distant. The reef flat was very shallow so I was unable to use the outboard; I found it quicker to walk the dinghy through the coral gardens than to row.

When a few hundred yards away from the boat my worst fears were realised I could see from the way *Ruby* was sitting in the water that she was already aground but only just!

It was deep enough now so I started the outboard and motored along- side. I tied off the tender and raced below starting the engine. The 6LW Gardner chugged into life and I pushed the gear lever forward and raced back on deck, cracking my funny bone on my right elbow as I rushed up the aft steps. Gasping with pain and rubbing my numb joint I gunned the engine and the 28 inch bronze propeller bit into the clear water kicking up a foaming white wash that soon became discoloured from debris sucked up from the coral flat.



*continued next page...*

**The Hicklings around 1998**

I could feel *Ruby* straining to free her keel from the reef but her 35 ton hull was now resting on the aft section of her keel. I increased the engine revs even more, trying forward gear then reverse; still nothing! I quickly realised that this was now a serious problem. My options were limited. There was no way we were getting off the reef, *Ruby* would have to lie over on her side as the tide went out and that would be that until the tide returned to re-float her.

***"I felt like Murphy was on my back and was digging his ankles into my sides like a cowboy with spurs."***

My biggest concern was that as *Ruby* went over on her side a large lump of coral might stove a plank in as the weight of the boat settled on the reef. I grabbed my mask and snorkel and leapt over the side. *Ruby* was already beginning to list to the starboard as her buoyancy ebbed away from her. The visibility around the hull was not that good but I managed to do a quick survey of where she was to lie and removed a few small lumps of coral. Luckily this area was devoid of anything big and nasty.

With a feeling of helplessness all I could do was watch as *Ruby* slowly lay down on her starboard side. She slowly exposed her underbelly to the setting sun. Charlie had waded out to see if he could help. We both walked around the exposed hull. I followed the anchor chain out to the drop off and saw it disappear into the murky depths.

"Oh well. There's nothing more to do now until the tide returns" I said, "We might as well go back to the BBQ." I told Liz that on sunset I would go stay on the boat and when she re-floated I would motor round to the northern side of the island and anchor there. I tried my best to seem relaxed and calm about the situation. I mean it's nothing to be aground on a weather facing reef with an updated forecast now predicting 25-33 knots.

Gabriel had said that Liz and the boys were more than welcome to sleep in their spare room.

On dusk I walked the green mile out across the dry reef flat, wary crabs scurried away into the small pools of water left behind by the ebb tide. As I climbed aboard the steeply inclined

starboard deck I felt the breeze beginning to freshen from the south west again. Great! It's going to be one of those nights.

If the anchor held then all I had to do was wait till *Ruby* was afloat then wind in the anchor and motor off the reef. It sounded simple but I felt like Murphy was on my back and was digging his ankles into my sides like a cowboy with spurs.

Down below was a depressing sight, everything was askew. Stuff not secured had fallen from port side to starboard, adding to the feeling of chaos. My mind couldn't compute the picture it was receiving, I felt as if I was standing in a room where the furniture and fittings were on the wall. The angle seemed so alien.

Two hours after the turn of the tide the incoming water returned to gently lap around *Ruby's* exposed hull. The wind had increased as predicted and was now blowing a stiff 25 knots from the south west. I sat on deck watching the stars sparkle on the water as it gurgled past the cap rail. Slowly the timber rail was encompassed by the incoming tide. The level crept up the inclined deck. I knew that pearling luggers were designed to be careened and had seen plenty of old photographs of the luggers of Thursday Island doing just that.

*continued next page...*

I just hoped that the rising water would soon give buoyancy to the hull and would begin to lift her off the reef. The tide raced in quickly, it was now only a matter of time before the depth over the reef allowed the waves being whipped up by the increasing tempest to roll in and start slapping against the exposed hull.

The minutes dragged on and on, I couldn't sit still, I constantly walked to the bow then back to the stern, checking, trying to judge how much longer. Sitting aft I looked at the angle of the masts against the back drop of stars and saw that the solid timber spars were beginning to point skywards again.

The swell over the reef was now big enough to jar the slowly rising hull. Each wave that hit sent a steadily increasing shudder through the boat. By the time the deck came level it was obvious that this was not going according to plan. The waves kept pushing the now buoyant hull side -ways, further over the reef, towards the shore. The keel was still hard aground at its lowest point and was acting as a pivot allowing the bow to be pushed around from facing west to north- west. The anchor clearly wasn't holding. With enough water around the boat I started the engine, engaged forward gear and went back on deck.

The wind was humming through the shrouds and the rope halyards were slapping annoyingly against the masts. Suddenly a flash as intense as a welding arc obliterated my night vision. A peel of thunder followed milliseconds after. Then more lightning and more thunder, then the heavy rain. Ok thank you, thank you Oh Great Murphy in the sky, just what I wanted, bring it on! With 30 knot wind gusts hitting *Ruby's* topsides and the south west swell pushing her towards the beach I began to feel a wee bit anxious.



**Luggars careened at Thursday Island, circa 1960's**

*Photo by Frank Hurley,  
courtesy of National Library of Australia*

**TCP NOTE:**

**You will have to buy the book to find out what happened! See next page for info.**

**A NOTE FROM BOB:**

For those that aren't familiar with the history. Jon, Liz and family have played an important part at one of the most fascinating sailing destinations on the planet.

Middle Percy Island has seen it all.

To get an idea of the history of the place, see the TCP website:

[www.thecoastalpassage.com/thepercystory.html](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com/thepercystory.html)

Also, the world's sailing community needs to recognise the work that continues on the island by Cate and John to preserve the magic.

When you step ashore at West Bay, you tread on sailing's holy ground.



Jon is printing and binding these books - here are a few photos he sent.



*Living in the 'Out Front'  
of Australia*

*And  
'Past to Present'  
A History of the Percy Islands*

can be purchased by emailing Jon at:  
[rubbycharlotte@hotmail.com](mailto:rubbycharlotte@hotmail.com)

'Living': \$65au inc gst plus s&h  
'Past to Present': \$75au inc gst plus s&h

# Support *YOUR* TCP!



Dear TCP Readers,

Now in its 14th year *The Coastal Passage* has been successful because of its focus on telling the real stories about real people on real boats and issues real boaties find interesting and important. From what we hear and from what our web statistics program tells us, there must be many of you that get a lot out of the paper too. If you are one of those, how about contributing a little support for *your* paper.

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Cheers and happy boating!  
Kay and Bob Norson

***For details on sponsoring TCP see:***  
**[www.thecoastalpassage.com/sponsorTCP.html](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com/sponsorTCP.html)**



# The Marinas Bundaberg Port Marina

By Sue Streeter, *SY Pacifica*

Photos courtesy of Bundaberg Port Marina

Bundaberg Port Marina is located on the Burnett River. Upriver is the city of Bundaberg. The entrance of the river is deep water access, located at the tip of the Southern Great Barrier Reef. It allows easy landfall via a well-marked shipping channel.

The Marina is built on the lee side of a sweeping bend in the river, providing shelter from flood waters and is also a proven haven from flood debris. When the design criteria for the marina was established, construction of overall structures was carried out to withstand the expected loads of all weather conditions while vessels are moored in the berths.

The city of Bundaberg has only recorded 3 cyclones in 120 years, the largest being a Category 2. The Marina provides an instruction sheet, "Severe Weather Planning" Guide to ensure maximum protection for boats and crews.

The Marina, opened in December 1998, has very well maintained buildings, manicured lawns, attractive garden beds, and an overall aesthetically pleasing clean and tidy environment.

*continued next page...*



# The Marinas

Likewise the floating berths, 180 in all, up to 45m in length are fully secure with gates operated with swipe cards. Power, water and security lighting is supplied to each berth, WIFI available to marina patrons. Clean, modern toilets and showers, an easy walk from the marina berths, plus laundromat with 3 washing machines and 2 dryers, is next to the ablutions.

The Laundry, as in most marinas, is a mecca for book swapping, meet and greet, assorted tradies cards, noticeboard, etc. It is here you will learn about the popular Friday night BBQ/Get together held on the grounds for marina patrons.

Marina Rates, February, 2017 (subject to change) are as follows for a standard 12 Metre Vessel:  
Monohull - \$48 per day, \$240 per week, \$707 per 4 weeks, \$1980 Quarter, \$3563 Half Year  
Multihull - \$63 per day, \$315 per week, \$922 per 4 weeks, \$2583 Quarter, \$4650 Half Year  
Rental rates are calculated on overall length of vessel and include GST. Liveaboard fees for 2 people are included in the daily/weekly price. Each extra person on board is charged at \$6.00/day, \$29.40/week, \$92.00/4 weeks.  
Air Conditioners - extra \$16.50/week.

*continued next page...*



# The Marinas

The Marina courtesy bus takes patrons into Bundaberg weekdays plus a Sunday special trip to the Shalom Markets. The local Council bus service runs into the city Monday-Friday + Saturday morning (not Sunday or Public Holidays). Bus timetables, plus a wealth of information on local attractions is offered from the Marina office in brochures and handouts. A restaurant/coffee shop, Ships Chandlery, Seafood Takeaway (supplies fresh from seafood factory next door to marina complex) and Marine Brokerage complete the facility.

For those of us who wish to "stretch their legs" after a long sea voyage, the township of Burnett Heads is easy walking distance from the Marina. A large IGA store is open 7am - 8pm daily (bar Christmas Day and Anzac Day morning), plus pharmacy, newsagent, bakery, hairdresser etc. in the town. The IGA also runs a courtesy bus and will pick up and drop off customers on a "phone call" basis (07) 4159 4777.

Just to ensure you are not cut off from the world at Bundaberg, the City has daily rail and coach services heading north and south, plus daily air services connecting to Brisbane from the Bundaberg Airport with Qantas & Virgin Airlines.

A Travel Lift and Hardstand Facility is located next to the Marina, catering to vessels up to 75 tonne, maximum 6.4 m beam. An overview of fees is as follows (all prices include GST):

Lifts Per Foot (incl Out & In): 0-40ft \$10.00, 41-50ft \$11.00, 51ft+ \$12.00



*continued next page...*

# The Marinas

Bundaberg Port is an entry port for international boaties. The Australian Customs has a local office in Targo Street, Bundaberg and can be contacted via email [bundaberg@border.gov.au](mailto:bundaberg@border.gov.au)

It is recommended that arriving vessels contact Department of Immigration and Border Protection by email [yachtreport@border.gov.au](mailto:yachtreport@border.gov.au) - Fax +61 2 6275 5078 - Ph +61 2 6246 1325 - to report their arrival into Australia. This information will then be passed on to the relevant Australian Border Force port for processing.

Prior to arrival or departure from Australia, it is also highly recommended that Masters visit [www.border.gov.au](http://www.border.gov.au) to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities in reporting both their vessel and crew to avoid penalties or prosecution, and also obtain contact details for the relevant ports to their enquiry.

Contact details for the Marina:

Web: [www.bundabergportmarina.com.au](http://www.bundabergportmarina.com.au)

Email: [info@bundabergportmarina.com.au](mailto:info@bundabergportmarina.com.au)

Telephone 07 4159 5066, Office hours 0800 - 1630, 7 days a week

The local VMR488 can be phoned on 07 4159 4349

VHF Radio listening on Chs 16 & 67, then to Ch 81.

Open 7 days/week, 0600 to 1800 hrs - after hours monitoring until vessel in safe anchorage.

*continued next page...*



Sue

*Photo by Maureen Griffith*

Now based at Cairns, Sue has owned *Pacifica* for 15 years, and moved on board to live in 2010. *Pacifica* is Sue's 4th sailing boat. The first 2 were with partners, the 3rd was an 8 metre Quest which Sue kept in Moreton Bay, Redland Shire. Sue has sailed as far as Thursday Island group, onto to Gove in the Northern Territory, and from Cairns as far south as Bundaberg. She regularly makes trips to the reef and loves the Cairns area because, as Sue says, "We are so close - a day's sail there and back - to coral cays and The Great Barrier Reef." Sue retired last year after 30 years in real estate doing property management. She has started the business *Marina Berth Swap* in 2015 ([www.marainaberthswap.com](http://www.marainaberthswap.com)), which she hopes will take off to benefit cruising folk.

# Bundaberg Port history with TCP

## Report and comment by Bob Norson

TCP was just a couple years old when we were contacted by Bundaberg Port Marina regarding the running of a regular 1/2 page ad. This was a good account and we were delighted to have it but at the same time we received an email from an American boat in the marina complaining of their treatment by a member of the Customs team.

This was the first conflict with Customs that TCP reported but unfortunately, wasn't the last. The American yachtie was asked to detail his complaint in a factual manner and to provide support for his claims. He responded as asked and presented text and photos to dispute what he had already heard the Customs agent was telling other people about the incident. He made a compelling case.

In the interests of fairness, TCP contacted the local Customs office to see what they had to say. We received back an email describing how professional, well liked and respected their agent was, implying that the American cruiser was not as credible. I replied with a reminder that what we were looking for were facts of the matter. Bundy Customs replied they would not be addressing facts which I found to be a surprising position/admission.

Then we were contacted by the marina manager who was adamant about **not** wanting the matter published. Here we were with a new and valuable account. Were we going to lose it before the first ad was printed? It was up to the editor, me. In what turned out to be a milestone, TCP published the account of the yachtie but refused the Customs account because of their outright refusal to comment on the facts. The actual matter was small compared to the principles involved.

The Customs agent apparently boarded and entered through the companionway, without notice or permission whilst the American couple was engaged in normal affairs within; an unthinkable transgression where they were from and hopefully in Australia as well. To our relief, the advertising account survived the tension.

As the years went by many more horror stories regarding the Bundaberg Customs team were reported to TCP and we printed those that were credible facts and the invitation was always open for anyone disputing facts of an account published in TCP to respond in kind. Our reports were never challenged on that basis.

*continued next page...*

Finally there was an especially bad one. The incident occurred during the Port to Port Rally that terminated at the Bundaberg Port Marina. A vessel returning to Australia after a long absence via the rally was searched by Customs in an extremely destructive fashion after having evicted the couple from it. Of course, nothing incriminating was found. The details of it read like Pulp Fiction and TCP wasn't the only one to cover it. Channel 7 TV and radio stations also reported on the facts of it and under pressure, Customs offered to pay for repairs. The marina manager was visibly distraught at the sight of yours truly showing up at the time with camera bag and note book. But still the ad wasn't cancelled!

At the time we began receiving emails supporting Customs in the matter but again, they were personal attacks on the victims. One in particular stated they were a Sydney boat that knew the victim's boat from the Caribbean and went on to describe it as an unseaworthy and ill kept vessel, like that was relevant. I traced the IP addresses that these mails originated from and they were all local to Bundaberg, further, since the example mentioned above gave their boat name I looked it up in the list of Australian registered ships where it is required to be listed if sailing overseas. It didn't exist. This wasn't the first time TCP had received letters attempting to form public opinion from dishonest parties but it was the most audacious.

There was at least one notable cruising website that didn't take the trouble to vet letters supporting Australian Customs in this matter so one can see why dishonest folk keep up the effort

By the way, I knew the victims boat and was not to be fooled. It was a Joe Adams boat built by a reputable team in Victoria and it was in good condition.

A decision was made that because of troublesome bureaucracy and lack of local support for the victims, TCP should not be promoting the marina as a destination. We dropped the ads.

So why is this article in TCP now? With the unfortunate demise of Mid Town Marina in Bundaberg because of the floods of a few years ago, the Bundaberg Port Marina fills a necessary void. Many readers will benefit from the information so that is that. Also it has been quieter concerning Customs, probably due to TCP coverage in the past that has alerted sailors to the need for careful preparation and made Customs more sensitive to the fallout of abuse of an otherwise important function.

**Thanks again to Sue Streeter, *THE* marina expert for another informative report.**

# Bundaberg Flood "Revisited"

*This article was in TCP #46, Jan-Feb, 2011. This article warns of what may be in store for another "Season Of Storms". The flood reported below (more coverage was in the electronic version of that edition) hit Mid Town hard and the next one finished it. As Cyclone Debbie lays a course for Bowen we wonder... (written here March 27, 2017)*

Up the Burnett River to Bundaberg lies a Coastal Cruising icon and an international destination. Ask a US boat that has circumnavigated and they will know Bundaberg-Rum-Mid Town Marina. Coastal Cruisers would allow more time in Bundy because trades and equipment are all there and reasonably priced. Step off the river side marina and you are in the town. Fresh seafood and chandlery by the office, and the slipway across the river with hard stand storage and full workshop and slip facilities. In short, everything a boat and crew need, right there. *continued next page...*

Story and photos by Bob Norson, who visited Bundy Jan 4, 2011

## Bundaberg Flood "Revisited"

This year may have been busier than most as (ironically) more boats were coming south to escape the predicted high cyclone season in the tropics. But no one could have predicted the floods that have devastated Bundaberg and have just now cut off Rockhampton.

At Mid Town Marina, one of the two newer buildings has been carried away, disappeared, the other wrecked. That was the chandlery and seafood store. The old office and chandlery still stands with the laundry and toilets on top but both floors were flooded.

With the water dropping rapidly, the remnants of the marina are emerging but half of it is gone and there will be a lot of repair before that is useable, but the work has begun.

Everywhere it is brown, depressing.

I talked to Lorraine at the Slipways and they are also beginning the job but for right now it appears assessment of the damage is enough to keep a crew busy. Their facilities appear mostly intact but they don't have power until the electricity company can inspect the service. They have a big Tri on the slip but can't bring it out till then. While some of their property has been reported washed ashore downstream there is no accounting of all the boats that were in storage yet.

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## Bundaberg Flood "Revisited"

Between the mooring field, marina and hardstand, there may be boats that are never accounted for and it is heartbreaking. Over the years we have come to know so many of them. One of the steelies left high on a bank is *Bralkeza*, launched after a refit and re-naming at Edges Boat Yard in Airlie Beach while we were there in 04. It was a family boat, kids crawling around everywhere on her.

Another piled up in a scrum is *Buffetteer*, an Alden Malabar schooner built traditionally and beautifully by a professional photographer on the Gold Coast. Gerry Noon just woke up one day and decided he would build a boat, didn't even know how to sail. She looks only lightly damaged but the little cat under her is destroyed. *Pennant*, an early Crowther Spindrift built by the Salisbury's of balsa core, the first in Australia perhaps, looks OK and tied up to what's left of Mid Town. There is a story behind every one.

Lorraine of the slipways lives in a solid brick home just behind and above the yard. The water got within inches of them there. She reported the "noise was terrible." The damage at the water front suggested that it wasn't just high, it must have been ferocious. Trees were bent over, light poles snapped and earth scoured back to bedrock in places and some of the muck deposited in new shoals.

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## Bundaberg Flood "Revisited"

The sea off the Bundy Coast will be brown for some time. The ecological balance of Hervey Bay must have been changed by this event.

TCP extends whatever help we can provide to individual boat owners affected by this flood and the water front business's of Bundaberg.

TCP would like to make the point that "lightning can strike anywhere" but Bundy is overall a safe place and should not be avoided due to this one off event.

**TCP NOTE: Nature proved that lightning can strike twice as in 2013 the repaired remnants of the marina were washed away entirely.**

*more pics next pages...*



# Bundaberg Flood "Revisited"



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# Bundaberg Flood "Revisited"





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# Asia for beginners? or Sometimes it's about getting there... and sometimes it's about being there!



The ferry terminal with Motor Bankas lined up and loading.

**Story & photos by Bob Norson, SC *BareBones***

**I cleared out at Bitung Sulawesi Indonesia. Next stop was to be Samal Island in Davao Gulf, Mindanao, Philippines. 350 NM... easy, right? I had been taking big bights of sea like that but had seen enough to have respect for how hard it could be. It's not like making an ocean crossing. Here there not be dragons... here there be FADS, ferries, fishermen and flotsam! Not to mention reefs and islands.**

**Those islands looked interesting but my charts were short of detail and since they were still Indonesian territory I was concerned about getting caught out by Indonesian government which I would prefer to stay on the good side of. I have since found out that most boats passing that way stop in and no one has reported getting pinged. Not every country is as weird as Australia about such things.**

*continued next page..*

## Asia for beginners?

Fortunately the winds were forecast to be usable most all the way. Unfortunately the forecast was full of shit. When getting fuel ordered from the village across the channel from Bitung where I was anchored, I was told they were a little short of what I needed... too hard to go across the channel to get it by dinghy and anchorage over there was dangerous if possible at all. When I went to pick it up and pay for it I discovered the order was more short than the merchant had let on. A little mathematical error? Yeah, right... nice try guys. But the winds were forecast to be good....!

I was baited onward by the forecast promise of a window of westerly winds or I might have tempted bureaucratic wrath by anchoring up for a while to see if things improved. As it turned out it wouldn't have made any difference as there was a northerly in that wasn't to break... well... yet!

South of the Davao Gulf I discovered a strong NNE current to add to the charm of the head wind. Even though the wind and current were close to lined up there was a very short chop that had my motor in the air quite a bit. The Hondas can be a pain in the rectum in some ways but no two ways about it... they are tough.

I began to tack into it as fuel use was a greater concern. I found that with one motor just ticking over, sipping fuel, I could still make about 4 KTS VMG into the 10 kt wind.



One of the ferries from Davao to Samal Island

It was mid morning when I approached OceanView Marina at the north end of the island. No response from the radio but eventually I saw staff running around to pull back the barrier that protected residents from attack.

This was the place that a few years ago had been the subject of attack and attempts to ransom prisoners by Abu Sharif or whatever lowlife Muslim terrorists du jour. Two sailors were brutally murdered and the marina manager was eventually recovered in poor shape. I heard he was in out-standing condition when he was taken and returned barely alive. The government's response was to move in a permanent military guard over the place. Anyway, there was plenty of room for *BareBones* and me. Skippers from *Soggy Paws*

and *Changing Spots* were there to take lines inside and I was grateful to them as I was exhausted. And it was pretty entertaining to hear natural English again.

After living on the hook in Indonesia for a while you will become adept at adapting! But here everything was taken care of for me! And if I needed help nearly everyone speaks reasonable English! WOW! Transport to the main island was free by marina shuttle and ferry. Then to Immigration and Customs by Jeepney which cost a whopping P15, about \$.40 AUD. Easy and fast and back to the marina to catch up on rest. Quarantine? What Quarantine? Inspection? Why?

*continued next page...*

## Asia for beginners?

The world is not fair. If it was the Philippines would be an overnight sail from Darwin and then onward to Malaysia and Thailand and finally to Indonesia, progressing in difficulty. Even though Indonesia has improved their visa program it is still no match for Philippines.

This not to say that Philippines are just another international suburb of the US or Australia. Far from it. It is deeply, if not consistently, Asian! All the adventure without the pain!

To illustrate here is a typical account of going into town (Davao City) for a little shopping:

Jump in the shuttle, a Chinese made Ute with a box passenger on the back. Ride into the island village of Babak.

Getting off at the turn to the passenger ferry there is a scrum of motorbikes and trikes (motorbikes with a covered sidecar) looking for fares among arrivals from the boats.

A short walk to the waterfront is the ticket office. Pay your 12Pesos, about \$.30 AUD/.2USD then proceed to the clipboards on the table to write in your name, address, age and sex so you body can be identified if there is an accident.... The motor Bankas are crudely built out of hardwood and powered by big diesels. They run often and there is always one being loaded up. I step over the bow pushing it's truck tire fender into the rough concrete jetty. There will be a crew standing handy in case a lady or elderly need a hand.



Inside the roomier Banka and the other smaller one

Inside under the canopy there are rows of benches seating three across each side if crowded and maybe only a single long bench on each side. I like the roominess of those. The skipper lights up the motor and powers back into the current to lever the bow around. Then charging forward at maybe 7 knots. On nice days it goes too soon. I am always the only white guy on the boat.

Nearing shore the crowd starts forming forward to exit. A soon as the bow touches the jetty people are jumping off. We walk past the ticket office and clipboards and file into the walkway to the market on the other side.

*continued next page...*

## Asia for beginners?



**Everything is at the market that is in demand and priced right.**

First there are the well lit shops of about 3 metres square. They sell clothing, sandals, eggs, plastic kitchen things.. anything.

Then a little further in the seafood section is covered over and cooler and always wet as the merchants regularly throw water over their tables to keep the catch wet. Many kinds of fish and shellfish. Also edible seaweed, some of which I have had and it is good.

As the path narrows and gets ever darker under the tin and tarps I come to the tables where the pork butchers are displaying their meat on tables, whisking away the occasional flies. The chicken tables are soon after. A woman who runs that table uses overhead motors with plastic trailing from the fan blades to shoo the pests away for her.



**This man has a marlin to sell; huge cutlets with brown sugar and pineapple...my favourite!**

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**This couple has a good catch of "swordfish," squid, seaweed and other good stuff to sell this morning.**

## Asia for beginners?



Fresh garden vegetables are everywhere. Filipinos have a good diet.



More veggies and fruit. The variety is amazing. I don't know a lot of this stuff and there is more to be had from just roaming in the forests. Food grows here for the picking.

## Asia for beginners?

Lights are now posted so people can see the beautiful display of fruit and fresh vegetables, incongruous in the surrounds.

As I approach the welding arc, white light of daytime on the street, the dust and traffic are a traumatic change to the quiet, close, moist and dark interior of the market paths.

I will go to the "G" Mall so I cross the street. This is a matter of courage and trust. Playing dodgem with heavy trucks and trusting that if you make the wrong call they will look out for you but in Asia everyone does just that. Asia would seize up if forced into the straitjacket of Australian rules of the road. In Australia I have heard Asian drivers criticised for incompetence but I would argue the opposite. Asian drivers are highly skilled or the place would be littered with wrecks and bodies!

On the other side are the waiting Jeepneys. I speculate they got the name for US army trucks left after the war that were converted into local buses. Now many are hand made using wrecking yard parts as much as possible and fabricate the rest. That or converted small Chinese or Japanese brand vans. I look for the locales served written on the sides or on signs dangling from the inside of the windscreen. I find the right one and jump in. You don't ask how much, you just hand up the money and the driver will issue change if appropriate. I am way back so my money goes through a few sets of hands to the driver and in reverse for the change if any.

The drive goes slow as the driver will solicit trade from any and all likely looking walkers. Don't worry about missing a ride, a wiggle of a little finger will have the driver locking brakes and sliding a halt in front of you before a competitor gets you first! I notice the way the locals communicate with the most subtle gesture. Eye movement is enough. I rap on the roof to the driver to stop, they will stop anywhere.

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**Out in the light again and jump on a Jeepney.**

## Asia for beginners?



**A billboard for Mountain Dew soft drink. I remember when that was introduced in the US about 1964. Weird to see it here on sale for 10 pesos! Wahoo! English is everywhere.**



**A billboard for Dunkin' Donuts flogging sugar topped muffins by a roadside flower garden... where am I?**



**A billboard flogging jeans that flatter a cute bum and fine legs... all in English but the wild wires strung on the street give it away... yup... I am in Asia!**



## Asia for beginners?

A few meters to the foot bridge where the beggars hang out and down into the security check where the guards check all bags and under hats and feel around the belt line for weapons. I am in the mall!!

I pass the KFC and McDonald's to grab the escalator for the third floor where all the electronic suppliers are. I have a question about my new Sony camera and get expert help right away. Then to ask about a new ACER computer. Too expensive.

After a few other stops I head down to the supermarket.

This supermarket would be among the best I have seen in Australia. Row upon row upon row... and that is just the import section! The most popular products of a type made in Philippines, USA, France, New Zealand or Australia can be found. Except fresh milk. But I prefer to drink good quality UHT than the poor quality fresh milk available in Australia. Also I don't have the cold storage room. Devondale brand is the best in Australia but at this supermarket I found a brand from Uruguay that is better and a little cheaper.

*continued next page...*



**And then the shock of .... THE MALL!**

## Asia for beginners?



**California jalapeno peppers and more! Expensive but you will make up for it on the cheaper local products.**



**Service is top notch here. They don't just bag your food, they will box and wrap it ready for transport.**



**The displays are always clean and tidy.**

I find Jalapeno peppers from California - YEAH! And locally made flour tortillas, frozen and uncooked, ready to throw on a hot skillet and served warm and fresh. Excellent! Smuckers jam from the USA... the possibilities are endless.....

On the way back I want to hurry along and feel like spoiling myself so I grab a taxi. The driver gets through traffic like a heat seeking missile. Cost is 150 Pesos, about \$4 AUD/\$3USD to the car ferry. Crossing in the passenger section I pay nothing as the owners of the ferry also own

the marina and provide it free.

On the other side I am solicited by a motorbike driver. He asks, 'Where you go'? Told him. He says, 'OK!' I ask how much peso? He shrugs, 'One hundred'. I shake my head and walk away. He follows and says, 'Fifty'? OK...

So a light year of cultural difference covered in less than an hour of slow travel. Asia for beginners or for those that have had a pure dose of Asia and are ready for a rest.

# Singapore Slingshot or "Asia for Beginners" - A TCP "Classic".

*This story was written in TCP #6 in 2004 by Lynelle Parker. It seems a good time to re-print this story as she also called Singapore "Asia for Beginners".*

Singapore is on the "milk run" from Aus if you are en route to Malaysia and Thailand. It was going to be our first significant stop-over since Darwin, and we were not going to miss it for quids.

But the Singapore we visited this time was very different from the Singapore we remembered when Lloyd and I last visited in the early 70's. Back then we wore Levi jeans and long hair, and we were always broke. Singapore might have changed but I couldn't help noticing we hadn't - we were still wearing jeans, both needed a hair-cut and now we own a boat, which keeps us practically broke.

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**Lynelle Parker of SY Chappie shares one of her favourite stop-overs en route to Thailand - Singapore**



**Singapore Quay**

## "Asia for Beginners" - Singapore

We had just spent four wonderful days in the calm waters of the Kumai River, and with that adventure behind us now, we couldn't wait to turn west under Kalimantan and then north towards Singapore - our favourite stop so far.

From Kalimantan you can hi-tail it straight to Singapore or you can dilly-dally as long as you like doing a few overnights, stopping off at the island groups on the way and allowing time for the traditional "Over the Equator Party". From the bottom of Batam Island it's a long day sail up the Riau Strait, but get the tide on your side and it's a slingshot ride out of the Strait and around the top of the island to Nongsa Point Marina. It's from here that you can sit back in comfort for a few days and plan your attack on Singapore and its notorious strait.

Once you are squared away at Nongsa Point you have a few choices on how to plan your visit to Singapore. Most cruisers leave their yachts at Nongsa Point marina and take the "very fast" ferry ride over to Singapore to get a first hand look at the strait and check out the marina facilities available, before returning to Nongsa to take their yachts over for a more extended stay on the island. As new kids on the block we choose this option, but for some of our more seasoned cruising friends, this was just another day at the office, and they simply threw their ropes and made a B-line for Singapore.

From the bridge deck of the ferry you get a pretty good look at the traffic separation scheme in one of the busiest ports in the world. The ferry lands at the Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal and from here it's a taxi ride to the train station and a train ride into the city. With over 15,000 taxis on the island nobody waits long for a ride. Public transport is just a breeze in Singapore. The train system or "MRT" (Mass Rapid Transport) as it is affectionately

known is cheap, clean, fast and air-conditioned and certainly one of the things that Singapore can brag about. The pushing and shoving at peak hour will get right up your snout and you can forget about getting a seat - it won't happen, but the trains travel so fast it doesn't really matter anyway.

***"We had 32 blips on the radar, and a quick glance around the horizon told us they were all bigger than us."***

During our few days in Singapore before returning to Nongsa Point Marina to collect our boat we discovered that the island now boasts several very nice marinas, some with haul-out facilities, chandleries, bars, restaurants, and let's not forget the complimentary poolside robe and towel service, a little over the top compared to our marina back home, but nevertheless a lifestyle we could certainly accommodate for a week or two.

Getting Chappie over the Strait to Singapore wasn't as easy as jumping the fast ferry. Make no mistake Singapore Strait is busy. We had 32 blips on the radar, and a quick glance around the horizon told us they were all bigger than us. We took the advice of those that had gone before us, that is, cross at right angles to the traffic and pass behind everything!!

A walk in the park you might think and it could have been if we hadn't hit a submerged object just as we were about to make our crossing. First came the thud, and then the motor stalled. Next came that look I've seen on Lloyd's face before. The one that says "I think we're in a bit of strife!" And I know exactly what to do when I see that look - go below and pretend I'm doing something useful..... and its just as well I did, we were taking water. The deep-sea seal had momentarily opened up and allowed water into the boat. As if we weren't nervous enough about the prospect of crossing one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, we now looked like we might sink. Fortunately the seal took up again as quickly as it had let go, and we were soon under way again.

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## "Asia for Beginners" - Singapore

New legislation passed in May 2002 requires that all foreign yachts and pleasure craft carry out their immigration clearance on board and at sea. So once safely over the shipping lanes the first stop is at one of the two Immigration Anchorages for your clearance into the country.

On arrival we called Immigration on Ch 74 and were immediately approached by the officials in their barge-like vessel. It was pitching up and down with huge black tyres suspended from its port and starboard sides. I clearly remember Lloyd's words as they came alongside. "It might have been simpler to sink on the southern side of the channel than be hit by this thing". But they are obviously very good at what they do, coming alongside to within an arms reach to collect our papers. The whole procedure takes about 5 minutes and pretty soon we were underway again with our fourteen-day pass stamped in our passports.

We'd decided to stay around at Raffles Marina on the western shore, some 25nm away, and with ships moving in and out of their designated anchorages all around us we felt like we'd been pretty well boxed around the ears by the time we tied off at the Marina.

*continued next page...*



**Just another fish trap...**

## "Asia for Beginners" - Singapore

### ***Where to stay.....***

If you decide to leave your yacht at Nongsa Point and visit the island via the fast ferry, accommodation is easy to find, you can pay as much as you like, and you'll pretty much get what you pay for. The equivalent of \$50-70 Aus dollars will get you a comfortable room with air-conditioning, attached bathroom and TV. Of course if you have a wad in your wallet you just can't wait to part with, Raffles Hotel will let you stay on as long as you like in one of their little cheapies for about AUS\$650 a night.

If you are intending to stay on your boat, check out the facilities that best suit your needs. Even though Raffles Marina is about an hour out of Singapore city proper by bus and MRT, we choose to stay there. The facilities were very good, movies, restaurants, chandlery, and a pool (complete with the complimentary fluffy white towels).

### ***Food for thought.....***

So what does one do in Singapore for fourteen days you might ask? Well, eating is going to take up a considerable amount of your time because in Singapore fun is literally "dished up".

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**Raffles Marina**

## "Asia for Beginners" - Singapore

As soon as we discovered their national pastime, and by the time we had left Singapore we were carrying our fair share of excess baggage!! It's at the hawkers centres where you will find a veritable feast of Chinese, Malay, Thai and Indian treats. The amenities are basic, the atmosphere is bustling, the prices are unbeatable and the food is authentic and tasty.

We had no idea what we were ordering sometimes, but if it looked good on someone else's plate, we used the international gesture that is universally understood - look and point.

If you want to have a smiling waitress sashay around your table and talk you into ordering a peel-off-the-bone Caroline Honey Baby Back (whatever that is??) you will pay a little more than we did for our meals.

### **Shop Talk....**

If eating is the national pastime for Singaporeans, then shopping must come in a close second. The shopping centres are open from about 10am to 9pm daily and if you have never "shopped till you dropped" you can do it right here. If you are feeling pretty cocky that you haven't spent too much do remember since leaving Aus,

The character building stuff is trying to find it. But because this is the obvious place to buy new boat electronics, computers, digital cameras and all those "toys" we don't seem to be able to live without, it's worth putting in the time here.

Orchard Road is the main shopping strip and while your man is out buying electronics any girl worth her salt can do some serious spending in this neck

of the woods. If you like bookshops you will love Borders, at Wheelock Place. Back home you'd be in serious strife for standing in the newspaper store reading the latest copy of your favourite magazine, but here they actually encourage browsing and to prove it they provide you with seating to do just that. It's quite a "novel" idea really. And when you run out of shops to browse, look for the arrow in some of the shopping complexes that amused us most - the sign under the arrow simply says "MORE SHOPS".

***"...be careful, you can really drop a bundle in this town. You name it - Singapore has it for sale".***

### **So much to see and do....**

Our favourite visit was Jurong Bird Park. Home to over 8,000 birds from 600 species, this is the largest bird park in all of Southeast Asia and home to one of the largest hornbill collections in the world. We took the "Night Safari" and wandered through the world's first night zoo. Clever lighting makes it possible to view the animals from Asia, Africa and South America in their natural habitat at night.

And if you have trudged around the shops all day and you don't feel like walking, jump on the tram that runs continuously through the park. We spent long afternoons in the Singapore Zoological Gardens, and quiet mornings wandering through the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Take in breakfast and stroll through the National Orchid Garden housing some 60,000 plants and orchids.

For a great view of Singapore, head up to Mount Faber, or take the cable car to Sentosa Island, an immaculately kept giant playground just south of Singapore.

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## "Asia for Beginners" - Singapore

Raffles Hotel, built in 1887 was restored to its original old world charm during the 1980's, and still qualifies today as one of the world's greatest 19th century hotels. They do a Sunday brunch that is to die for, but you need to book in early.

### ***Ethnic Singapore.....***

We visited Arab Street, Chinatown, and Little India and found some of the most exquisite batik, fine lace, and silks. These are great places for dining and ideal places to pick up souvenirs as well as some fine antiques.

If its history you want - Singapore has plenty of it, and you can spend at least a morning or afternoon in any one of their excellent museums.

We had fourteen wonderful days in Singapore and when it came time to check out we visited the Harbourmasters office once more for our port clearance. Clearing with Immigration and Customs is a little more complicated. You see its quite a "backtrack" around to the Western Quarantine area from Raffles Marina, to check out with immigration, if you are heading north up the Malacca Straits, but it is possible to have Immigration come out to the marina. The only catch is that a fee is levied to cover the taxi fare for the officer to come to your boat. Luckily for us, four yachts were clearing the same morning and we were able to share the AUS\$50 fee between us.

A friend of ours told us that Singapore is "**Asia for beginners**" - Since leaving Singapore we have cruised Malaysia and we are currently in Thailand. Reflecting back on his comment, he wasn't far off the mark. We loved it, and we will return, if only to line up at the Long Bar at Raffles Hotel and order the legendary "Singapore Sling".



**Lloyd and Lynelle, around 2004**



# The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race - Warm, friendly and then you are in the Spice Islands!

**By Bo Wharton SY *Mango Madness*  
Photos courtesy of Claire Hall and  
Lindsey Wharton**

Forget the 628NM Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race that's cold, wet, upwind & ends in Australia. How about sailing the 634NM Darwin-Ambon Yacht Race that is warm, dry, off-wind and ends up in the fabled Spice Islands of Indonesia!

The 32nd Race departed Darwin on the 13th August 2016 with 16 yachts in 4 divisions IRC, multihull, premier cruising & rally. We competed in premier cruising (9 yachts) with our Beneteau 473 GT (more on the GT later...). We are Darwin based and it was our 13th race since 1981 when there were only 5 boats. The race grew to 100 boats until 1998, when local troubles stopped the race for a few years, but all is good now.

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***Mango Madness and Bo - ready to go!***

## The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race

The race is run by Dinah Beach Cruising Yacht Club. The club is set on a mangrove lined creek in Darwin Harbour, it runs out of a nice donga with the cut off stern of a captured wooden Indonesian fishing boat as a bar. It's a bit like having a beer in a swamp surrounded by friendly pirates. If you are sick of the south try this for character.

Amongst our division were 4 Beneteau's (50', 47', 40', 38') and 3 Jeanneau's (51', 45', 38'). We have recently decided to keep our beautiful & practical Beneteau 473 as its ergonomics and size suit our ageing and sometimes aching bodies. It has 20 opening hatches, windows for the tropics and one of those rather old fashioned proper navigation stations a bloke space.

We have been yacht racing for many decades and have some nice carbon racing sails, an A-sail & several spinnakers. Because our boat is a bit tail heavy we have added a 0.8m sugar-scoop which gets the stern clean out of the water and gives us a 1.5m long & 2m wide fishing platform which can also easily accommodate two deck chairs and a table for evening gin & tonics (GT).

Our crew consisted of 7 my wife Lindsey, daughter Claire and her friend Libby (all experienced Darwin sailors). We also had Rory & Toni who are relatively new to sailing (and we want to encourage them) and lastly an old school mate and experienced yachtsman, Bill Wright. Ask him about his list of "firsts" achieved on this trip...



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**Mango Madness and crew at the race start**

## The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race

The first 65 miles was a light wind fight to a tidal gate at Bathurst Island north of Darwin. This was followed by A-sail & two sail reaching before squaring away for a spinnaker into Ambon Harbour entrance followed by a nerve wracking 5 mile beat up the harbour. This involved 30 knot katabatic winds falling off the high volcano mountains followed by nothing with nervous looking behind.

We finally took line honours by a few minutes over the Jeanneau 509. The Beneteau 40 won on handicap, we came 2nd and the Jeanneau 45 was 3rd. It was close racing all the way. *Antipodes* a Santa Cruz 72 from Hong Kong won the IRC and broke the 18 year old race record in 52 hours 25 minutes previously set by a local catamaran, *Zuma* in 1998.

Racing was followed by several days of organised celebrations hosted by the local community. There were school visits where donations were distributed, spicy local food washed down with Bintang, dancing & friendly games including Dragon Boat racing with about 30 people per crew! Forget going to Bali - that's for backpackers on a plane. Ambon is the gateway for isolated cruising... North to ancient Kingdoms, west to Asia, or east & south to Australia.

*continued next page...*



**Bo, Billy, Lindsey and locals with a local basket.**



**Bill Wright and a student during a visit to the local primary school.**



**Bo Wharton enjoying a sundowner on the way to Ambon. Great weather, fairwinds and the perfect point of sail making this race true champagne sailing (or G&T).**

## The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race

Lindsey & I together with Bill & his wife Suzie spent 4 weeks cruising home through numerous islands. Firstly, we headed to Banda Neira a beautiful active volcano in a protected harbour with ancient Portuguese & Dutch forts and cannons on the street. This island is part of Australia's early discovery and the scene of the world's biggest real estate deal (read "Nathaniel's Nutmeg"). It is also among the top 10 dive spots in the world.

We then cruised through two isolated island groups, each consisting of hundreds of smaller islands. Beautiful isolated anchorages, some adventures and fascinating village visits with gifts for the locals. The GT deck proved its worth as my wife Lindsey caught several fish including a 4ft Spanish mackerel. We left the last island group only 200NM north of Australia on a reach with a number 3 headsail and one reef in the main averaging 7.5 knots.

Adventures in paradise - sure is - we will be back. Remember, you can't have too much fun!



**A view from Banda Neira Island overlooking the harbour**

# The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race



**Crew of Mango Madness at the Welcome Ceremony promoting DRUG FREE SPORT.**  
*From left: Claire Hall, Rory Hinton, Toni Crew, Libby Ewens, Lindsey Wharton, Billy Wright & Bo Wharton*



**Bo Wharton (one of the founding members of Banda Neira Sailing Club and some locals that helped make the clubs flag.**

# The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race



Lindsey Wharton with some local children aboard *Mango Madness*



Bo Wharton & Nicho  
Tullalessy (President of  
Ambon Sailing Community)

# The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race



**Lindsey & Bo enjoying the fishing on the way around Indonesia**

The Coastal Passage #83 April - May, 2017,



Bo enjoying his "race" to Ambon

*Lindsey Wharton photo*

# Information you may be interested in about the 2017 Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race

The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race was the first international yacht race from Australia. It began back in 1976 with a modest 6 boats. Entries steadily increased over the years as the event's reputation spread and its tradition grew.

Sadly the 1999 race was cancelled and was not held for the next 8 years due to civil unrest. This year will mark 10 years since the race was restarted. It is now run by Dinah Beach Cruising Yacht Association (DBCYA) with the support of the local community.

DBCYA is a unique yacht club located in Darwin and runs the famous 'Wet Season Race Series' from November to March each year. The races cater mainly to keelboats, although smaller trailer sailors have been known to participate. The club has great DIY facilities including hard stand, careening poles, floating pontoon, workshop, toilets & showers, laundry, mail service and a bar/kitchen open 7 days. It is located close to many of the marinas, chandleries and Darwin City. The club also hosts regular live music and other events throughout the year with a good following.

This year's race to Ambon will see the addition of some favourite activities from years gone by including the Becak Racing, Gila Bamboo, Greasy Pole & Dragon Boat Racing. The Ambon Sailing Community (ASC) has also arranged visits to surrounding villages and local schools for sailors that are interested in something a little different. Home stays as a unique accommodation option are a great way to immerse yourself in the local culture & way of life.

The ASC will be sailing in the race as the only Indonesian crew. They have been working hard over the last few months learning the ropes and have completed practice voyages from Bali to Ambon late in 2016 and more recently from Ternate to Ambon.

For those wanting to cruise through Indonesia, Ambon is a great starting point as the Indonesian Archipelago offers some amazing sailing and continues to draw many local Darwin boats back year in year out just for the sail home.

The Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race really is one of those "bucket list" trips not to be missed. Whatever your motivation be it unrivalled cruising destinations, champagne sailing on the 600nm race, good weather, fun parties or the overwhelming hospitality from locals, everyone should do it at least once. Many sailors enter time and time again, and can offer great camaraderie and local tips along the way.

We are expecting 20 to 30 boats in 2017 with entries now open. The race is set to start Saturday, August 5th. Visit our website [www.darwinambonrace.com](http://www.darwinambonrace.com) for more information on the race and to check out our most recent newsletter.

**Interested skippers should contact:**  
[info@darwinambonrace.com.au](mailto:info@darwinambonrace.com.au).

**By Claire Hall**

*continued next page...*



# Information you may be interested in for The 2017 Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race

## What does the \$350 entry fee include?

- Yellow Brick Race Tracker\*
- Free Goodies Bag.
- Meal at Race Briefing in Darwin
- Refreshments at Farewell function in Darwin
- Meals & entertainment at Welcome Ceremony in Ambon
- Entertainment at Awards Ceremony in Ambon
- Participation in the local Cultural Games Activities in Ambon
- Assistance with Customs, Immigration and Indonesia entry forms
- Access to interpreters to help with language barriers throughout processes.
- Coordination of fuel & water supplies.
- Arranged opportunities to visit other local villages & schools.
- Race administration in Darwin and in Ambon.
- Hire of Race Office and equipment in Ambon.
- Support with finding extra crew, flights back to Darwin, entry process and local logistics.
- An easy start to cruise in company for your trip to Asia.

\*Each participating yacht will be issued with a tracker for the RACE. As soon as the race has started the tracker will send a signal every ten minutes showing the position of all yachts on the tracking page. A link to the tracker website will be provided at RACE Briefing for family & friends to follow your progress.

## What does the \$60 crew fee include?

- Meal at Race Briefing in Darwin
- Refreshments at Farewell function in Darwin
- Meals & entertainment at Welcome Ceremony in Ambon
- Entertainment at Awards Ceremony in Ambon
- Participation in the local Cultural Games Activities in Ambon

*continued next page...*



*Bob Norson photo*



*Bob Norson photo*



*Claire Hall photo*



*Claire Hall photo*

# Information you may be interested in for The 2017 Darwin to Ambon Yacht Race

## Social Events:

We have a great program of events scheduled in Ambon this year that have been organised by the local Ambon Sailing Community to showcase the Indonesian hospitality & culture. Events include Becak Races, Greasy Pole, Bambu Gila, Dragon Boat Racing, the famous Gamelon & even a beach party with the locals! There are also opportunities to visit other local villages & schools for those interested.

## Home Stays:

The Ambon Sailing Community will be organising Home Stays as a unique accommodation option for anyone interested. Please contact [info@darwinambonrace.com.au](mailto:info@darwinambonrace.com.au) for further information.

## Flights Home:

A charter flight direct from Ambon to Darwin will be available for those short on time. The flight will be departing at lunch time on Sunday 13th August. There will also be seats on the inbound flight for people meeting boats in Ambon for the cruise afterwards. A one-way ticket costs \$700. People wanting to book a seat should contact [ops@hardyaviation.com.au](mailto:ops@hardyaviation.com.au) with their details.

## After Ambon:

Have you decided where you will cruise after Ambon? We have information for those not yet familiar with the area on our website submitted by local sailors. Maybe you might like to check out the famous Ora Beach Resort. Ora Beach Resort is a supporter of the 2017 race and welcomes any boats wanting to venture north to Seram. [www.exoticorabeach.com](http://www.exoticorabeach.com)

## Sponsors

Bob Norson skipper of *BareBones* who placed 2nd in the Cruising Multihull Division in 2016 is one of our Media Partners in 2017. Bob with his wife Kay run an independent FREE magazine, *The Coastal Passage* on anything boating and has over 100,000 readers. It is downloadable in PDF format: [www.thecoastalpassage.com](http://www.thecoastalpassage.com)

Once again in 2017 Mix 104.9 will be a Media Partner for the race. A local Darwin radio station playing a variety of music, the station has been around since 1997 and has a great following. [www.mix1049.com.au](http://www.mix1049.com.au)

Spot On Marine is a family business that has been around for over 30yrs and a great supporter of our race. Their services include; 50 tonne travel lift with 6.1m beam, water blasting, soda blasting, water, power & ladder supplied, live aboard facilities including a pool. [www.spotonmarine.com.au](http://www.spotonmarine.com.au)

Fast loading, eye catching websites designed for any budget offering services in Darwin, Katherine & Bali. Jeni has been managing our website for many years and also takes promotional photos at the race start. [www.jenda27.com.au](http://www.jenda27.com.au)

The newest sailing business in town! Sailing Adventures NT is run by David Omnes and offers harbour cruises for up to 12 passengers on their Seawind 1000 starting in June 2017.

Hardy Aviation has offered charter flights direct home from Ambon for over 30 years. This year they will also be helping assist us to transport donations for the schools in the surrounding villages as a token of our appreciation for the local hospitality. [www.hardyavation.com.au](http://www.hardyavation.com.au)

**For more information and updates see the Darwin Ambon Yacht Race website:**  
[www.darwinambonrace.com](http://www.darwinambonrace.com)

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**AMBON SAILING COMMUNITY  
and  
AMBON CITY GOVERNMENT**

# Rashes and infections on boats

By Kay Norson, SC BareBones

I perspire (sweat) a lot; I hear that's a healthy thing, but it can be uncomfortable and, energy draining. Of course a dive over the boat's side for a refresher and maybe a nice sit in the shallow water with that beautiful clean sand. That's the ticket! So, now I feel better and time for a drink with book to stay cool till the hot sun goes down.

Whoopsie! I forgot one thing and now I am paying for not stripping off my bathers, rinsing them and hanging them out to dry for my next "dip". I have a rash in places we won't name here and they sting!

Water borne rashes can lead to infections and are no fun and can cause lots of stress / sleepless nights, etc. There are lots of algae, fungus, etc. in water that can cause grief. So a good way to keep them off your skin is to be aware of where these skin problems come from in the first place.

What does your water in your water tanks look like? This is the water you wash yourself with it can also be the cause of rashes and infections. There are many ways to keep the tanks clean, but most of all you need to do this before they get grubby!

Then there is the chemical reactions to sun screens, insect repellents lotion, soaps etc. Saltwater, heat and even shaving rashes can be more of a challenge for them to heal when out on the water.



*Sitting in the cool salt water is refreshing, but...*

**Here are a few tips to keep rashes and infections away that may help. What's yours?**

**Keep you skin dry** (not as easy as it sounds near the water)!

**Rinse and dry bathers** well after use with fresh water.

**Wear light 100% cotton** loose fitting clothes, like sarongs. Yes, men also love sarongs as you can imagine where the rash can be the most irritating!.

*continued next page...*

## *Rashes and infections on boats*

**Aloe Vera gel** (my favourite great for sunburns and cuts too).

**Calamine lotion.** Ugly on skin, but it does dry and soothe. A favourite for poison ivy or other bushwalking plant infections.

**Cortisone cream** when it gets unbearable. You can buy at a chemist without a prescription. It is usually called Derm-aide. Just ask.

There are so many ointments, lotions, etc. that claim to be the best, but I have found that the purest (free of chemicals) are the best. Read the ingredients. I cringe when I read ingredients like urea, "benzoates" (or something like that) and petroleum jelly (note the first part of the word, *Petrol!*).

I know several "water people" that swear by coconut oil and olive oil for their skin and hair; rashes and itchy scalp included. Cornstarch powder or similar (Talc powder) can help keep skin dry, but can also be the cause of a rash!

Another tip is to bathe in some Epsom salts. Not many boats have a bathtub, but you could try it in your dinghy or a large bucket, or just a wash cloth dipped in water and Epsom Salts solution and rub on body...

What is Epsom Salts anyway???? This is a common name for Magnesium Sulphate, which is a compound containing magnesium, sulphur and oxygen. The "Epsom" in Epsom Salts is the name of the town of Epsom in England where the salts harvested from the local springs there. Soaking in water with these salts can soothe itching, reduce inflammation, and relax the nervous system. They are known to have anti-stress properties that can help with headaches. They are also a popular ingredient in aroma therapy baths.

Ears seem to be an area where rashes/infections also occur. I have found a soft tissue with some "Specially Methylated Spirits" dipped on it then wipe ears inside and out. This acts as a drying agent and can help infections.

There is nothing worse than an eye infection when boating! Eye wash is critical to keep in your first aid kit. A rash or infection in the eye can be disturbing. You can also ask your chemist for some antibacterial eye drops. Bob once got a tiny piece of steel in his eye and the antibacterial eye drops cleared up the wound. Yes, he even had to wear an eye patch while it healed!

### **Here is some words on that subject from Marge Sullivan, MV *Aussie Spirit*:**

*"Yes, aloe vera gel is fabulous. Every boat should have a little aloe vera plant for burns, stings, itches, dry skin, etc. And another must have - Manuka honey. It is a great antiseptic and works on some things that other antiseptics or ointments don't work on. Helps healing etc.*

*For itching, painful conditions - clove oil is excellent. It helps relieve pain especially. Remember using it for tooth ache? I watched a program recently about marine scientists diving on the reef collecting fish samples. They used clove oil to stun the fish as it's non-toxic and safe. So interesting"*

*Bicarbonate soda is good all round - Relief for itchy skin, a relaxing bath or foot soak, exfoliator, sunburn relief, homemade toothpaste and oral wash, homemade cleaner for around the home, natural deodorant, and more. I make my own tooth powder (paste) -1 part bicarb, 2 parts Celtic sea salt & a couple drops of peppermint oil. Bicarb can be used as a substitute cleaner for everything including your body.*

*continued next page...*

## Speaking of water:

If you have a water maker (de-salinated water) or have filled your tanks with rainwater are you aware that there are no (or very minute) minerals in this water? You may be deficient in minerals like magnesium. Magnesium is an essential mineral for overall health of heart, muscles and nervous system. Symptoms of deficiency can be nausea, confusion, loss of coordination, irritability, to name a few. None of these are conducive of fun on a boat.

### Here is some words on that subject from Ada, SY Geronimo:

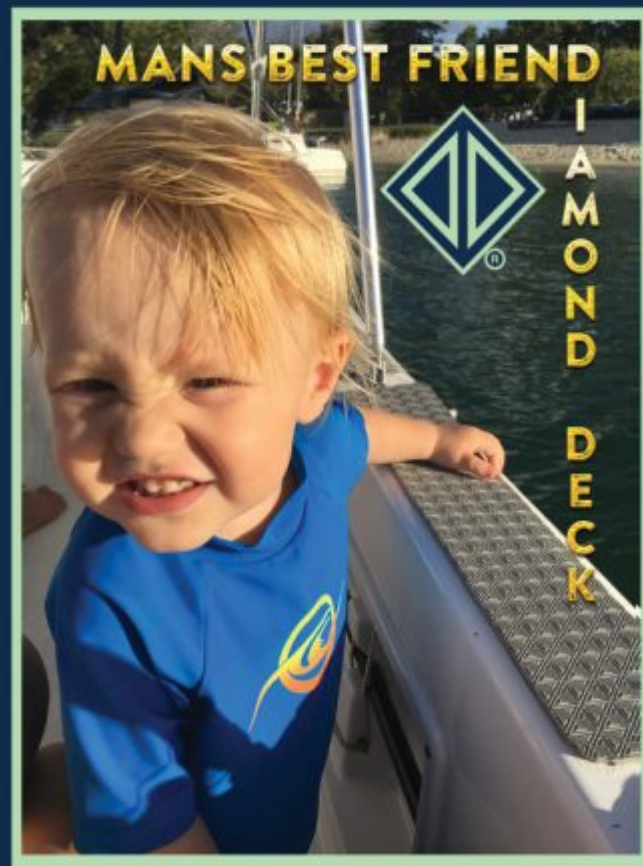
*"With the onset of the warm / hot weather, we loose more minerals via sweating, so replenishing becomes more important. Magnesium is rather scarce in Australian soil and water, so we don't get much in our diet. Rain water doesn't have minerals in it, and Magnesium deficiency is very common in Oz.*

*There's some water filters that will impart some minerals back into the water (Nikken/ PiMag etc.), but it's very small amounts and repeated changes of filters makes it an expensive option. Bottled water doesn't contain much magnesium either (unless from O/S) and are expensive.*

*So probably the best option is a good Magnesium formula (there are a few on the market, most of them mix well in water and taste good) or some Magnesium tablets.*

*If you have a veggie garden, you can add dolomite to the soil (Magnesium and Calcium) which will improve the mineral status of the vegetables you eat, and allow you to get some Magnesium from your food. Epsom salts scattered around fruit trees also helps."*

Here is a good tip on an easy (and cheap) way to add more minerals into your body, especially in hot weather: Add a pinch of sea salt (more in hot, humid weather) in your glass of water. Marge Sullivan says Celtic Sea Salt is best as it has trace minerals in it that refined salt does not, so you are helping your body absorb these minerals such as magnesium.





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# Why DIY is always the best way to sell your boat

By **Stuart Mears, SY Veleva & Author of "OVER-BOATED?"**

When it comes to selling a boat, the vendor's first impulse is often to hand-ball responsibility over to a yacht broker. Maybe the boat has become a mental block; maintenance has been neglected and the vendor just wants it gone.

But the reality is that this mindset is an open invitation to rape. Bend over if you must, but it's not to be recommended as a recipe for survival, let alone financial prosperity.

A big part of the reason why boat prices have crashed since 2007 has to do with precisely this dysfunctional vendor mindset against a backdrop of generalized financial stress.

There is a very powerful reason why this tactic fails every time; which is also the reason why DIY is nowadays the only way to go.

The reason has nothing to do with broker commission. While the broker's commission is often cited by vendors, the rationale for DIY has absolutely nothing to do with cutting out the middle man and saving commission.

The yacht broker business model is about getting deals across the line. And even though the boat vendor pays

the broker's commission, for multiple reasons it's the vendor not the buyer that will be leant upon in a price negotiation. The vendor is already in the broker's pocket. The buyer on the other hand represents not only an immediate opportunity, but also future business because every buyer becomes a vendor. The broker leans on the vendor and price takes a hit.

The thing is, buyer emotion trumps price every time. But activating buyer emotion must begin the moment your prospective buyer discovers your vessel on the Internet. If you're serious about selling your boat for its true worth, you absolutely need know how to activate buyer emotional response. Step by step, it's in the book.

## ***A SPECIAL OFFER FROM STUART AND ITS FREE!***

DIY boat vendor advertisers in the The Coastal Passage now have access to a free copy of OVER-BOATED? (the book) in whichever format is e-reader compatible. If you are one of them send me an email at [editor@over-boated.com](mailto:editor@over-boated.com) and specify your e-reader.

Additionally the author offers TCP advertisers a critique of your boat for sale presentation a few suggestions that is to improve response and better your chances of hooking the ideal buyer.

And like his sainted mother was fond of saying: "no one likes a smart arse"...he promises to be on his best behavior, to be positive and encouraging at all times, so no reason not to take him up on the offer. It's free...promise!

STUART MEARS

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Email: [sales@southernseasmarine.com](mailto:sales@southernseasmarine.com)

*For more photos & details see:*

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**Phone Steve: 0437 747 696**

**email: [swagner@optusnet.com.au](mailto:swagner@optusnet.com.au)**

***For more details see:*  
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# ***Vision* is for sale**

**50ft Steel Pilothouse Cruising Ketch**

*more on next page...*



# Vision is for sale



Hull is 6mm Corten medium tensile steel, reputed to be more rust resistant than mild steel, this boat is well equipped for long range liveaboard cruising, and furlers on headsail and in main and mizzen masts simplifies short handed sailing. Dual helms, on covered aft deck and in pilothouse.

This vessel has recently undergone an extensive refit and there doesn't appear to be anything left to spend.

120 HP MWM 6 cylinder diesel, reconditioned BW gearbox, new uni's in jack shaft, reconditioned 3 cylinder Kubota driving 8kva 4 pole genset, runs at 1500 rpm, much wiring renewed, new led interior lighting, new battery banks, fully repainted, tankage for 1700 litres diesel and 800 litres water, some new electronics, massive amount of storage, plenty of hanging lockers, this is a big yacht with 6ft 8in headroom throughout.

Large aft cabin with queen size double, ensuite, with another head forward. New stove and new gas installation, new stainless sink, 12V fridge/freezer in galley and a microwave.

Large engine room allowing excellent all around access to engines for routine servicing.

Large ice box forward could easily be refrigerated. Hot and cold water with new hot water service. 2 x 12V macerator toilets with holding tank on forward head.

Nicely varnished timber finishes throughout in a generally light, bright,



interior. Large furling genoa has been sailmaker inspected and new UV protection strips added. In mast furling main and mizzen sails.

No expense spared refit recently completed with the view of long range world cruising and unfortunately unexpected health problems have put paid to these plans and the boat has reluctantly been placed on the market, at well below cost and well under insured value of \$220,000. Now reduced to \$165,000 this is good value for money. More details on [www.nqboats.com.au](http://www.nqboats.com.au)

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