



CRUISING NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2019

VDL Tasmania Circumnavigation – 2019

By

Grant Collins

On Friday 16th August, 2019 a smaller than average crowd of 36 people attended the monthly Cruising Dinner. It seems not only birds and whales migrate north during our winter, but many Victorians also. And who can blame them as I sit freezing my butt off writing this article.

However, they did miss out on a very interesting evening and a delightful meal of tender lamb shanks followed by wonderful chocolate mousse. We had gathered to hear Craig Walton (YKnot) and Terry Frankham (Reliance) tell of their experiences doing the VDL Bi-Annual Circumnavigation of Van Diemen's Land.

The talk was divided into two parts with Craig, owner of YKnot, a Farr 420, covering the build up and preparation and Terry, owner of Reliance, a Bavaria 42, covering the cruise itself.

This trip had been on Craig's Bucket-List for some time. The cost of registering for the cruise was \$500. This was done in March 2018 and Jeremy Firth's 'Anchorages of Tasmania' and a very highly detailed cruise manual that left almost nothing to chance, were provided.

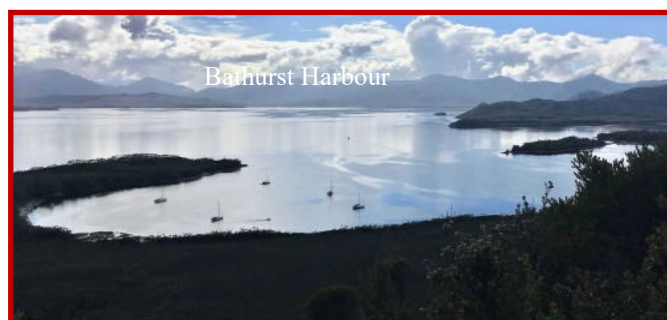
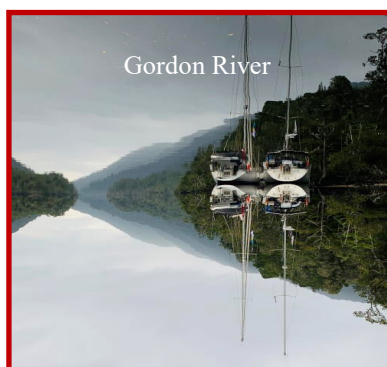
YKnot was freshly anti-fouled, everything was serviced and his boat had to be surveyed that year anyway for insurance purposes. So the boat got a thorough going over as the safety requirements for the cruise were highly specific.

The HF Radio had to be in good working order for the compulsory evening skeds. The HF was invaluable as you knew where everybody was and how they were going. A non-compulsory social morning sked also took place. Initially there was a lot of static and interference on YKnot's HF. This was found to be caused by the water maker, which had to be turned off during radio skeds. I had a similar problem on Currawong during a Bass Strait Cruise when the VHF interfered with the HF. I once forgot to turn the VHF back on after using the HF, with near disastrous consequences, but that is another story.

A detailed briefing was held at RGYC where the 12 Victorian boats taking part met. All was ready to go. From here Terry took over the Commentary.

The fleet left Queenscliff heading to Three Hummocks where the boats spent 5 days waiting for the rest of the fleet who were delayed on their passage across the north coast of Tassie being much slower than expected. They then made their way to Macquarie Harbour where they spent 7 days exploring the area including the magnificent Gordon River, one of the true highlights of the trip.

This was followed by an overnight trip to Port Davey, where they stayed for 4 nights exploring the region including Bathurst Bay and some intrepid souls braved the inclement weather to climb Mount Rugby.



This region is a truly pristine wilderness as it can only be reached by boat, helicopter or an arduous hike. It also proved to be very windswept during the length of their stay.

Another 5 nights were spent at Recherche Bay in glorious weather before heading for Hobart via the beautiful D'Entrecasteaux Channel.

Reliance spent 4 nights in Hobart then went onto Port Arthur where they were holed up for another 4 days due to bad weather. YKnot stayed in Hobart for the extra days. They joined company again at Maria Island before calling into Wineglass Bay. As both boats had other commitments back home, it was decided to make a run to Refuge Cove for a brief stop-over before heading to Queenscliff. They decided not to stop at Queenscliff as the next day's forecast was for 25 knot northerly, and were rewarded with an escort of a pod of playful dolphins all the way from Queenscliff to RBYC.

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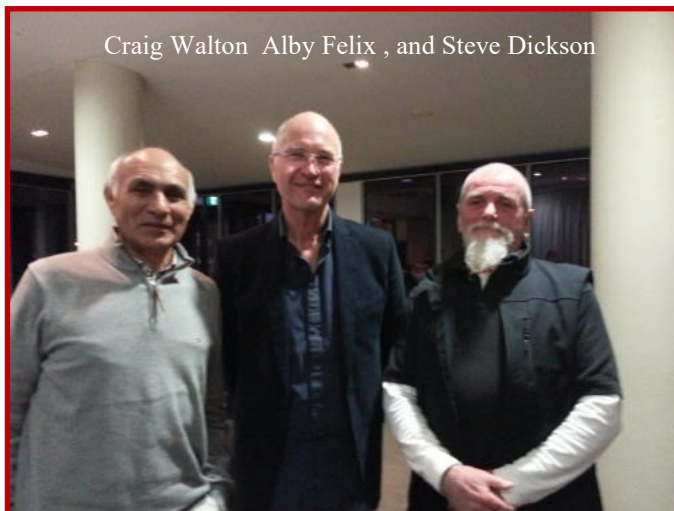
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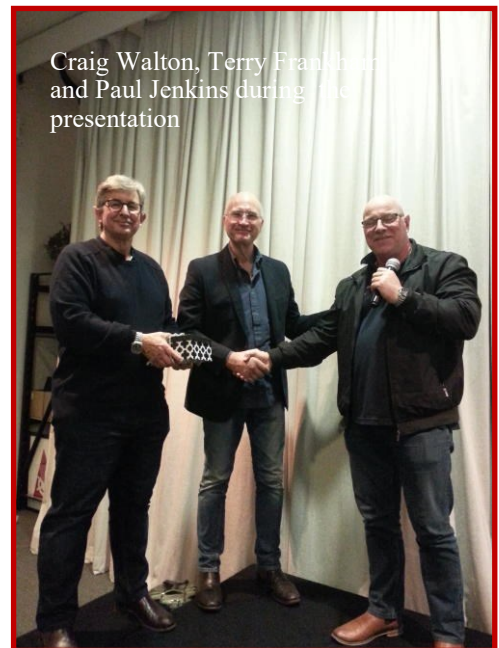
One of the greatest highlights was the camaraderie between all the participants. If any boat had difficulty with any sort of breakdown or gear failure, the other boats in the vicinity did not hesitate to cheerfully offer a helping hand. Craig had problems with overheating but was helped by a diesel mechanic from one of the other boats. Fortunately another boat which lost a propeller was carrying a spare but had trouble fitting it until another boat's crew member improvised a fitting from an old square shafted screwdriver. The repair lasted until the boat got to Hobart to have it properly sorted.

Another great local hero is Mary from Smithton Radio, who is 84 years old and is known and admired by countless boaters. I remember calling her over 17 years ago and she had been doing a sterling job long before that. The trip took 6 weeks from 24th February, 2019 to 4th April, 2019 and by all accounts they would like to repeat the trip again sometime. Reliance crew – Terry Frankham, Chris Clarke, Peter Esdale and Steve Harnett. YKnot crew – Craig Walton, Steve Dickson and Aldy Felix.

All in all this was an entertaining evening and all who were there expressed their thanks to Craig and Terry for a fantastic night with a great talk and fabulous photos



Craig Walton Alby Felix , and Steve Dickson



Craig Walton, Terry Frankham and Paul Jenkins during the presentation



Terry Frankham, Chris Clarke, Peter Esdale, and Steve Harnett



Davey

BOATING IN THE BALTICS

By Lyn Bingham



David and I have just returned from our escape from Melbourne’s cold weather, this year we enjoyed a trip to the Baltic countries. We visited Helsinki, Finland; Tallin, Estonia; Riga and Klaipeda in Latvia; Villnius and other places in Lithuania; Warsaw, Poland and Berlin, Quedlinburg and Frankfurt in Germany.

Our first “on water” activity was a visit to one of many islands off the coast of Finland. It was a local ferry to the island of Suomenlinna an 18th-century sea fortress and nature area with centuries-old artillery and defensive walls, spread across 6 linked islands. That night David dined on reindeer for dinner and I ate salmon.

The following day was the big ferry across the Baltic Sea/Gulf of Finland from Helsinki to Tallin, Estonia, a trip of about three and a half hours. The Viking XPRS ferry has a length of 185. mtrs, a top speed of 25 kts and carries 2,500 passengers. We came across a lively bar at the stern of the ferry and a group of musicians playing familiar songs we knew, Creedence, Beatles, John Denver, etc. so we sat and listened to while away the time.

Talking about big ships, there were four cruise ships in Tallin when we were there, so it was a bit crowded, but also a lovely old city to explore. Then on to Lithuania. Having enjoyed Riga, we next visited Klaipeda, gateway to the Curonian National Park and a short local ferry trip to the Curonian Spit a 98-km long narrow sandy peninsula on the Baltic Sea sheltering the Curonian Lagoon. It is a bi-national UNESCO World Heritage Site. We enjoyed strolling around the small town of Nida on the spit, while some of our group went bike riding and we enjoyed a lunch of smoked pike, rye bread and beer.

Klaipeda was just starting its annual “Seafestival” which is a part of Sail Baltic 2019 so a number of “Tall Ships” were in port. We saw one being towed in, no wind but sails up, while on the ferry. Another, the Meridianis spends most of its life moored in the Dane river as a restaurant but the bridges are opened to allow it to sea once a year.

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BOATING IN THE BALTICS

By Lyn Bingham



We strolled around after dinner and were amazed at the huge number of pop-up stalls selling everything from beer, food, clothing, etc. to all sorts of crafts including some from neighbouring Belarus. There were literally hundreds of people wandering around. At this time of the year (July/August) there are only a few hours of darkness, say from around 10.30pm at night until around 4am in the morning when it gets light again- and the weather was pleasantly balmy.

A train then to Villnius and a bus ride to Aukstaitija National Park in east Lithuania – an area of 406 square kilometers. Hundreds of picturesque lakes, vast pine tree forests, abundance of wild fauna and flora and sparse settlements make this a delightful place to stay and to explore.

And this we did by canoe one afternoon, setting off through a narrow shallow stream with overhanging branches, white swans and water lillies, which then led into one of the larger lakes. At one point we pulled up to shore, walked up a small hill to admire a view of five other lakes, and were each given a small stone by our guide to place on top of the hill, after circling the cairn and making a wish. We then paddled across the lake to our waiting bus and a shot of vodka each was handed around. I asked our guide how far we had paddled and he replied "Six kilometres". With aching shoulders and sore hands we wondered if tomorrow we would pay dearly but there were no after affects, fortunately. We stayed at a small guesthouse on another lake, and at the bottom of the garden was a small wooden landing, and two green painted home made wooden boats with square oars. David took us rowing across the lake which was very enjoyable.....there was no wind, the sun was shining and we didn't see another soul for a couple of hours.

Warsaw was interesting in that we were there on not only our wedding anniversary, but the 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising. There were red and white ribbons, decorative wreaths and flower arrangements and flags on monuments and statues in the old town. A visit in the afternoon to the Warsaw Uprising Museum was crowded with people. While walking back to the hotel when, at 5pm everything came to a standstill with sirens etc. blaring and then two minutes silence followed by the pealing of bells from surrounding churches.

On our way home we spent three enjoyable days at Quedlinburg (between Berlin and Frankfurt, in Germany). It is a small UNESCO heritage listed town undamaged and not yet full of tourists, with cobblestone streets, stone bridges over small streams winding around and an old town to explore. The medieval walls and towers, many half-timbered houses, and several medieval churches survive, contributing to an emerging tourist industry. The city is dominated by the 16th-century castle (now a museum) on the site of the old fortress and by the former abbey Church of St. Servatius (1070–1129, incorporating the remains of a 10th-century church). The church, castle, and old town were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994.

A wonderful and fast paced exploration of a small section of six countries, enjoying delicious food, and then back home to winter in Melbourne.

MEMBER NEWS

Member news is always interesting, please if anyone has any news they would like to share, let me know

Hamilton Island Race Week News

Several RBYC sailors and boats participated in this year's Hamilton Island race week with the Whitsundays turning on lots of sunshine with the windiest race week in years. Cruising Group members, Robina and Brenton Smith enjoyed sailing with a difference racing on a Seawind Cat 'Pirate Pete' (have they been converted) in the Multihull Division, while Jane Cooper and Paul Jenkins joined Grant and Delma Dunoon on Blue Water Tracks in the Non Spinnaker Division and our Chairman Peter Strain joined friends on a DuFour Grande Large Vanilla 2. Vanilla 2 had won the series the previous week in the Airlie Race Week then second in division at Hamilton Island while Blue Water Tracks won their non-spinnaker series. Well done to all.

Paul Jenkins has been accepted onto the General Committee for Season 2019 - 2020! Congratulations Paul.



Angela and Paul Woodman had a great time at the Magnetic Island Regatta. They came fifth in their division, out of 19 competitors, and were extremely pleased with this result



This was the first Hammo Week for Brenton and Robina Smith who hired a cabin on a new Seawind 1260 - yes that is it we moved to the dark side - temporarily. The sailing was fabulous with vigorous trade winds for five of the seven days afloat in one of the windiest Hammo Regattas recorded. The winds on the first two days were light (5kts and 8kts in the gusts) which provided a good shakedown for the crew



MEMBERS NEWS

Will and Pam Merritt have just returned from their land cruising trip , going inland to Lightning Ridge , St George, then north to Yamba, Nambucca Heads returning via Trial Bay , where they stayed for a number of days. Especially enjoyable when not viewed from a very rolly anchorage at sea .



David and Sally Spencer

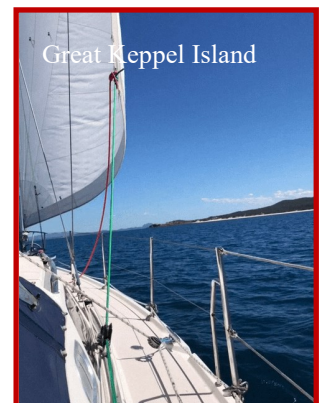
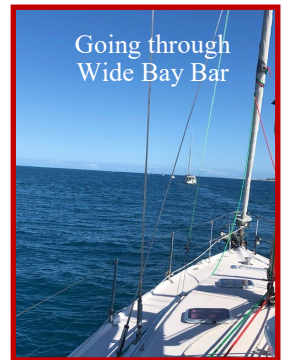
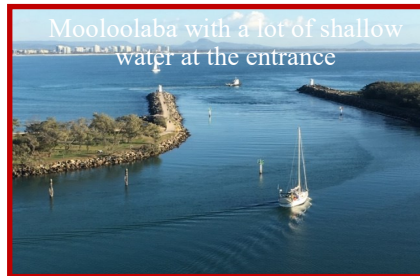
Are cruising Montenegro and Greece with John and Sandra McPherson from 16th August for five weeks



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'Aquacadabra has spent the last few weeks cruising the Hervey Bay region ,(where we caught up with some of commercial whale watching vessels) This included Fraser Island, then cruised south stopping at Mooloolaba and currently moored at RQYS. Navigation through the shallow channels must be done with care to work with the tides, as some areas are only passable at high tide. The Wide Bay Bar, though notorious at times is not hard if one pays attention to wind and swell height and the coordinates from VMR Tin Can Bay are a great help also. At low tides, one gets a whole different picture of the narrow straits.....

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Geoff Brewster and Barbara Burns "Saffron"

Have returned to lovely green South Gippsland after a six week cruise through the Great Sandy Straits, the Narrows between Curtis Island and the mainland, (and enumerable bars) to the Great Keppel Islands, and back to RQYS. Leaving Mooloolaba was exciting as some dredging needed to be done. However Saffron had no trouble with a draft of 1.47m. The Wide Bay Bar which seems to fill queenslanders with dread, was very easy the second time we crossed, with about five boats in convoy.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

FORUM DINNER MEETING

Guest Speaker: **Gerry Byrne**

Coastal Engineering and Port Planning.

Gerry Byrne is a Civil Engineer who has been working exclusively as a specialist in the area of Port Planning and Coastal Engineering for 45 years. For the last 23 years he has worked as independent consultant on the planning and design of coastal and Harbour designs.

As usual gather at the club about 6.30pm, members draw at 7pm followed by the meal and the talk. Please book with **Mandy (95923092)** no later than September 18th, bookings are essential. Please state any **dietary requirements** when booking.

END OF MONTH ON WATER ACTIVITY

27th to 29th September

Possibly combined bay cruise over the weekend to Wyndham Harbour. (Weather Permitting)

Otherwise Docklands

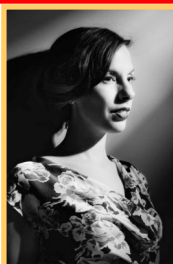
Paul Jenkins is the contact person

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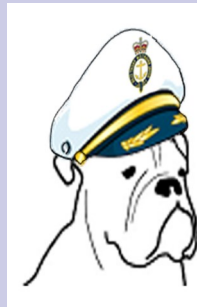
FRIDAY 18th OCTOBER

Keep this date free for our new look Music Night

THE GEORGIE BROOKS SWINGTET



A rising star in the Australian jazz scene, vocalist Georgie Brooks has spent the past thirteen years studying, performing and teaching vintage jazz and swing dance and it was here that her Love of swing era jazz was born. It was on the dance floor that Brooks met drummer Sean Loughran and the two decided to work together to create a band for their fellow swing dancers to enjoy. Since then **The Georgia Brooks Swingtet** has played numerous swing dances, concerts and jazz clubs including the Paris Cat Jazz Club and Dizzy's Jazz Club, further expanding and developing their concert repertoire. Festival appearances include The Melbourne International Jazz Festival, Castlemaine Jazz Festival and Melbourne Swing Festival.



Captain Bully's Blog

Hardly cruising news, but certainly some of the best cruising waters in the world are the Whitsunday Islands. Being extremely fortunate in having been invited to crew for a very old, as in long term, friend David Perkins now for the last 17 years, mostly competing in Hamilton Island Race Week again we returned to do both Hammo and Airlie Beach Race Weeks. The last couple of years have been on Vanilla 2 a Dufour 56 Grand Large. (Photo Attached) Schoolies for Grandpas is how my sons describe it, with little variance from the truth, when the rum punches arrive after every race.

While Melbourne froze in mid-winter gales, we revelled in warm twenty degrees days in t-shirts, cruising the gentle warm waters off Airlie Beach and round the islands near Hamilton. Sharing camaraderie with other RBYC boats, Summer Wind, Blue Water Tracks, Rampallion, Where's Wal and Keep on Running. The lay days included swimming/snorkelling at Whitehaven and Butterfly Bay.

Some years ago we were out crewing for a friend and sailed from Vanuatu to New Caledonia meeting up with sailors from around the world, a common response was questioning why we bothered to come out to these Pacific Islands. Their opinion almost universally was Queensland Coast was the best cruising ground in the world. It is hard to argue. The place is magic, you pinch yourself at the beauty of this coast.

Did I mention Vanilla 2 came first Airlie Beach and equal first Hammo, not bad for cruising. Should also mention. Blue Water Tracks won non-spinnaker and Where's Wal 3rd Performance Racing.

