

## Cruising Group Half Yearly Report (2024 / 2025)

It is with much sadness that the Cruising Group bid a final farewell to Will Merritt who was known affectionately as Chairman Will during and after his six years as chairman of our group during which it had a popular repertoire of monthly meetings and on-water activities.

The committee currently consists of Terry Frankham (secretary), Jo Walker, Rob Hurrell, Peter Strain, Peter Gebhardt, Tony Garvey and Brenton Smith. The chairmanship rotates each three months. Jo Walker chaired the group in Q4 2024, and Brenton Smith is the chair in Q1 2025.

The monthly meetings with guest speakers continue to be well-attended, particularly when we have guest speakers with topics that interest all sailing members, such as when two meteorologists from the BOM talked about local influences on the winds in Port Phillip. In November Wayne and Alli Sollars gave an entertaining summary of their 10-year circumnavigation of the world in Blue Heeler, a Hallberg-Rassy 36.

Presenters for the monthly meetings in early 2025 include Dan Lyon (Diver Dan) in March, Greg Clinnick in April and John Rundell in May.

October was to be the month for the ever-popular progressive dinner amongst the boats but alas after a perfect Thursday evening, the strong winds made this impossible on the next night. We are hoping for a better result at the end of 2025.

Inclement weather forced the Carols on the Hardstand BBQ in December to be once again the Carols in the Jock Sturrock Centre. It was another very pleasant evening with favourite carols being sung with much gusto a cappella led by the booming voice of Rod Watson.

The Annual Birthday Cruise for the Cruising Group in January was well attended with several boats and their crews making the brief passage to RYCV for a BBQ lunch on the lawn.

Interest in the monthly on-water activities declined in the second half of 2024, but the Cruising Committee has made a commitment to renew interest in these because they provide good social opportunities amongst the RBYC cruising community in addition to providing good opportunities for people to use their boats in a well-supported environment. Docklands or Yarra's Edge are always popular destinations in the winter months.

The annual cruise into Bass Strait continues to be supported, this year with three boats from RBYC, *Chakana*, *Kirra Kirra*, and *Why-Knot*, and two boats from SYC, *Atmospheric* and *Umbra Luna*. The boats sailed to the Tamar River, Tasmania via Refuge Cove and Deal Island.

The Cruising Group has been involved in the planning and promotion for the 'Empty the Marina Regatta' at the end of March.