



Albatross

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Photo: Di Catchpole

*Newsletter of the
Cruising Yacht Club of Tasmania*



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FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks to all the contributors to this month's Albatross. It is good to see that Albert Ross has returned after a long absence. Hopefully he will have many more observations to make in the future I wish Lindy Jones all the best in her retirement and hope that she and David have many happy times as they travel the world.

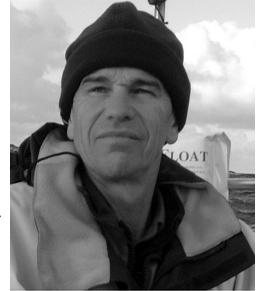


Don't forget to check the cruising Calendar and mark your diaries so that you don't miss any of these wonderful events.
See you all at the Christmas Party
Di Catchpole
Willyama

Calendar of Events	
8th November Meeting	
Nov 12th Day Cruise to Huon River	
Nov 25/26th Weekend Cruise to Adventure Bay	
5th December Meeting at Coast Radio Hobart	
9th December Christmas Function	

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VICE COMMODORE'S REPORT



Judy and I have just returned from our four week holiday, three weeks in California and a week car-camping around the Colorado Plateau. We had a great time and enjoyed being with our son and daughter-in-law, but it's nice to be back in Tassie. As I write this, we are planning to catch up with the Hobart Show weekend cruise on the Friday; hopefully the weather will have been kinder than the forecast currently indicates.

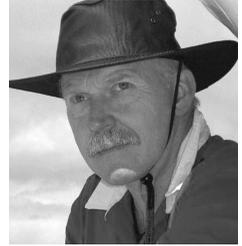
I have prepared the Cruising Calendar for the year, using the excellent template which past-VC Rosemary used last year. The Calendar will be on the CYCT web site and will be inserted in Albatross. Some of the details will change (not all are filled in yet). If you have a good idea or a favourite destination which you would like to share, please let me know and I'll try and include it.

In November, the day cruise is to an anchorage in the lower Huon River on Sunday 12th, and an overnight trip to Adventure Bay on 25/26th (still trying to check out new anchorages for D'Entrecasteaux Waterways). December is usually busy so I've omitted the day trip and shown a trip to Recherche Bay to see the New Year in. This is a departure from our recent New Year Eve cruises (Quarantine Bay); let me know if you think a venue closer to Kettering or Hobart would be better.

You will notice that I have included Reflections' MMSI number on the Cruising Calendar. I now have a VHF radio with DSC capability, so if anyone has DSC and wants to test it, please contact me. I'm keen to see how well it works.

Andrew Boon.

REAR COMMODORE'S REPORT



At the October Meeting Barry Jones gave a brief but challenging talk on maintenance and the importance of planning the servicing of the safety equipment on our boats. After Barry's presentation our guest speaker, Robert Grey gave an interesting and informative talk concerning maritime search and rescue. This was based on Robert's experience as a Royal Australian Air Force pilot of Orion aircraft used for maritime surveillance within the Australian Defence Force.

It was interesting to learn of the capabilities of the aircraft but also the difficulties experienced by the crew of these aircraft in finding mariners in distress. The importance of planning in relation to the use of emergency and survival equipment such as EPIRB and flares and the responsibility of boat owners and skippers in conducting safety briefings with crews including the planning for the possibility of having to abandon ship was discussed and was an important reminder to us all of our responsibility for safety.

Thank you both Barry and Robert for an informative presentations.

Tuesday 7 November 2006

Erica Johnson - Three Hummock Island, Bass Strait, as a cruising or holidaying destination. This will be preceded by Constable Jackman of the Tasmania Police Marine Division who will give members an update on maritime police activities.

Tuesday 5 December 2005

Visit to Coast Radio Hobart's facility at the Queens Domain. To enable members to view and listen to the 1903 sched conducted by Coast Radio Hobart, the club meeting will be held at

the facility at the top of Queens Domain at 1830 (6:30 pm), after a briefing by Barry McCann.

A barbecue will be held after the meeting and tour - bring your own everything except for tea and coffee which will be provided.

Saturday 9 December 2006

CYCT Christmas Function, 105 Otago Bay Road.

Barry and Margaret Jones have kindly offered their place as the venue for the function. A feature of the main meal will be a spit roast that will be prepared by fellow club member Roger Locke. On this occasion it is planned that we will start the function in the early afternoon and depart by dusk. For those who would like to anchor in the upper Derwent eg. near Cadburys, arrangements will be made to collect you from an anchorage on the western shore if desired. Please let me know in advance (by the December meeting) if you are likely to be requiring transport. Is there a theme? Yes it's Christmas come and join us for another enjoyable club function. (See advertisement in this edition)

Milton Cunningham Rear Commodore

We welcome
NEW MEMBERS

Mike and Penny Webb *Laura*

Neil Croll & Katrina Gonda *Thowra*

Geoffrey Pickard *Alcairo*

Jacques Renard & Robyn Davies *Solace*

**Minutes of the General Meeting of the Cruising Yacht Club
of Tasmania held at the Derwent Sailing Squadron, Sandy
Bay at 2000 hours on Tuesday 3 October 2006**

WELCOME

The Commodore David Bryan opened the meeting at 2000hours, welcoming 35 members and three guests, Jim Forrest and Jeanette Denby (USA) and Mike Webb.

APOLOGIES

Dennis & Wendy Lees, Andrew & Judy Boon, David Jones, Glenys Cunningham, Richard O'Connor, C Navarro, J Westman, W McDougall and T Creese.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

That the Minutes of the 5 September 2006 General Meeting, as published in the September 2006 edition of the *Albatross*, were a true and accurate recording of that meeting. Moved B Jones, seconded Roger Locke, and **confirmed**.

That the Minutes of the 5 September 2006 31st AGM Meeting, as published in the September 2006 edition of the *Albatross* re ratified. Moved R Locke, seconded L Foley, and **confirmed**.

BUSINESS ARISING

Milton Cunningham provided an update regarding the amended publication of *D'Entrecasteaux Waterways* due to be completed by December 2006. The working party is still requiring information on anchorages on east Bruny Island and the western side of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. There is provision on the CYCT website to place contributions or email information to Milton Cunningham or Andrew Boon.

COMMODORE'S REPORT

David Bryan reminded members that the RYCT Open Day Sailing Programs scheduled for Saturday 7 October 2006. Members were also advised that the Kingston Sailing Club encourages members to attend their sailing season open days in the future. Margaret Jones has kindly offered to undertake the role of Secretary for the CYCT in the absence of Lindy Jones.

VICE COMMODORE'S REPORT

Due to the absence of Andrew Boon, members are reminded of the upcoming events as previously listed: Hobart Show weekend 26 - 29 October cruise to Great Taylor Bay.

Andrew's daughter advised members that Andrew and Judy are presently in Los Angeles then intending to travel south to San Diego, returning to Tasmania on 21 October 2006.

REAR COMMODORE'S REPORT

Milton Cunningham advised members that:

Scheduled for the November meeting is Ms. Erica Johnson who will provide information about 3 Hummock Island;

The December meeting will include a presentation and barbecue at the premises of Coast Radio Hobart located on the Queens Domain. Advised that tea and coffee will be available, members to be advised regarding the serving of alcohol. It is anticipated that members will be present for the delivery of the scheduled 1903 hour radio calls, which will then be followed by the barbecue;

The Christmas function will be held at the residence of Barry and Margaret Jones at Otago Bay, it will be a Hawaiian theme, scheduled for early December, possibly 9th December 2006 - to be confirmed;

Tasmania Police Service to be invited to inform members of recent changes to legislation regarding alcohol.

GENERAL BUSINESS

New vessels added to CYCT register

John and Pam Skromanis have recently purchased the 33' Bol-lard design sloop, the '*Rohna Marion*'; and Nicholas and Helen Creese have recently acquired a Martz craft 35' yacht, the '*Stryder*'.

First Aid Kits

Members advised that the St Johns Ambulance Service will re-view and update first aid kits for a small fee.

Lithium batteries vs. Alkaline batteries

Members advised that although Lithium batteries can cost up to 4 times as much, they are a better investment than the alkaline battery.

TRAINING PRESENTATION (regular feature of General meetings)

Barry Jones provided members with an overview of annual inspections/requirements/replacements which are necessary for maintaining vessels, and included:

Licences and registration fees (incorporating fishing licences), National Parks licences, Tasmar Membership and Insurance renewals. General maintenance of fire extinguishers, EPIRB (now costing about \$450), flares, batteries, (torch, smoke alarm and clocks), first aid kits (expired saline solutions and tablets/medication), gas bottles, engine battery checks, coolant level of battery, engine oil/filters and fuel filters, updated CYCT membership list, update awareness/instruction/location details for the benefit of crew and/or guests.

GUEST SPEAKER

The guest speaker was club member Mr. Robert Grey (*'Patience'*) whose career with the RAAF spanned some 35 years and saw him retire at the rank of Squadron Commander. Robert's presentation included very interesting photos of the Orion aircraft and details of maritime surveillance, search and rescue missions and the practicalities of saving one's life in a maritime environment. Robert's fundamental piece of advice was *'to stay with your vessel for as long as possible'*. The presentation was extremely informative and interesting which resulted in many questions from the audience at the conclusion of his presentation.

MEETING CLOSED The meeting closed at 2145 hours.

An Application for Membership
has been received from
Paul and Caroline Dutton
And children Thomas and Sarah

CYCT Christmas Function Saturday 9 December 2006



Partially because of an extremely busy schedule this year and also because of injuries sustained when trying to do too much on 25 December last year, Santa Claus has advised that he will visit CYCT members at Otago Bay on Saturday 10 December.

To ensure that members are prepared for his arrival, they should make their way to Barry and Margaret Jones' residence at 105 Otago Bay Road at Otago Bay. Members should start to gather soon after 2:00 pm. He has advised that he will arrive in time for the evening meal and hopes to spend some time with us.

Theme! Yes a Christmas Theme - anything that resembles Christmas just be there for a jolly time!
(More details next meeting)

RSVP: Milton.Cunningham@bigblue.net.au or
62476777 or 0428166250 by 1 December 2006

Merry Christmas

NEW BOATING SEASON GUIDE LINES

Now spring is here the boat takes precedence over all other "jobs".

Licences, registration and memberships need to be current

*Power boat licence

*Power boat registration

*Fishing Licence – don't forget to check the rules about nets & lobster pots as the rules and fishing areas may have changed.

*National Parks Pass is required for Maria Is., and Port Davey

*Tasmar Radio membership

Boat Insurance needs to be current.

Check all expiry dates of:

Fire extinguisher

Epirb

Flares

New batteries in torch, smoke alarms, clocks

Do you have spares for all these????

Now for the First Aid... some items such as saline, paracetamol have short lives...

Replacement will be needed for items which have run out or are low in number.

**Gas bottles have a replacement every 10 years

Engine - Check the battery fluid level, coolant level, gear-box and engine oil.

Engine spares should include water pump & pump impeller, fuel & oil filters, spare oil and extra coolant. Tools required to replace all of the above should also be on hand.

A membership list of the C.Y.C.T. is always handy.

Check that operating instructions for engine, flares etc. are displayed clearly - all crew should know their whereabouts.

LIFE JACKETS – PFD1

No. 1512 is the current standards ID

Epirb 406MHZ - note the prices of these are currently being reduced.

Barry Jones

OPENING DAY

October 7th was opening day for the combined sailing clubs on the Derwent, including the Cruising Yacht Club of Tasmania. 2.30 pm was the designated starting time for the Club, with the Vintage Boat Club behind, closely followed by motor cruisers.

Andromeda was out with a crew of 12 and after entree in New Town Bay headed for the assembly point, with some of the gourmet crew members frowning at the disruption to dinner.

A full jib with the motor saw us down river at better than 8 knots, and the motor was disengaged south of the bridge. The jib had to be furled to allow tidying some loose equipment and a half jib was deemed sufficient for the sailpast.

Andromeda hit the start line two minutes early with Foxy Lady and Lalaguli in sight. The proximity of the aforementioned power cruisers made it unwise to delay the start any further and so we proceeded through Sullivans Cove, around the buoy and saluted the Lieutenant Governor before heading for the rendezvous at Bellerive Bluff, at better than 7 knots.

An anchoring spot was found in reasonable conditions and the remainder of dinner served.

Eventually we dragged for lack of swinging room and motored back to the RYCT to disembark the crew. The wind instruments recorded a maximum gust of 38 knots for the day.

Roger Locke

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“STRYDER” HEADS FOR HER NEW HOME

Leo Foley

“Stryder” is a new boat on the CYCT register. Owned by Nick and Helen Creese, she is a 35’ Roberts-designed “Martz craft”. Built in 1997, she is well equipped for coastal cruising. Nick asked his brother Chris, and Leo Foley to help him deliver her to Hobart.

Monday, 18 September 2006, dawned sunny and warm in Sydney. Nick and Chris had prepared the boat over the weekend, and Leo had joined them late on Sunday evening. All that was required was a quick trip to the shops for ice and other fridge items. By lunchtime, we had left our marina in Pittwater and were experiencing the first ocean swells of our journey off Barrenjoey.

We headed south, still considering a night in Sydney Harbour (just because it's there), but the beautiful conditions encouraged us to take advantage of the NE breeze and continue to Port Hacking. We picked up the public mooring at Gibbon Beach around sunset, feeling pleased with our first days' effort. The mooring, however, was set up for powerboats in very shallow water, and the buoy clunked annoyingly along the side of the boat, as 'Stryder' moved around in the gentle swell. We soon tired of the noise, let go of the mooring and anchored nearby. Much better!

Tuesday. An early start, with a long day run to Jervis Bay planned. Giving the 'Gibbon Bombora' a wide berth, we were soon in open water. The following breeze assisted us again, and we made good time. Off Port Kembla, we were treated to an acrobatic display by a pod of whales. They gave us the full show - tail slapping, fin waving and for full effect, breaching the surface and creating an enormous splash on re-entry. Point Perpendicular announced our arrival at Jervis Bay around 4pm. We checked the southern Darling Road anchorage but found it unsuitable in the northerly conditions. That meant we had a decision to make. We could motor the seven miles to the anchorage at the northern part of the bay, and retrace our track the next morning, or we could continue down the coast overnight. In the superb favourable conditions we decided to keep going. A front was expected to pass over the coast the following day, but we expected to reach Ber-

magui before it arrived. So much for expectations. Around 5am, Leo suddenly found the headsail back-winded, and the boat spun to face North. It was a 'big-end first' change, necessitating some sail rearrangements, but after all crew had their sleep interrupted, we once again headed for Bermagui. As the seas built, the boat slowed (motor-sailing now), and we regretted being quite so far offshore (12-15 miles off Montagu Island). However, we safely reached Bermagui for a late breakfast.

Thursday was again fine, with a 15 knot nor-easter, so we departed for Eden to wait our chance to cross Bass Strait. The winds turned SE early in the afternoon, making the seas lumpy. But it seems that whales like a rough sea, and they came out to play. All around the horizon, we could see them 'blow', and occasionally breach. As we approached Eden, we were ringside to the best show yet. Magnificent creatures leapt from the water, seemingly keen to outdo the last performer, and then splashed down to join their mates in mutual satisfaction. All of this within 200 metres of 'Stryder'.

Arriving at Eden late in the afternoon, we anchored behind the new naval wharf, and chatted with the canoeists staying at the beautiful on-shore lodge. The docile dolphin loafing around the boat was an added bonus.

More fronts were expected, so Friday was a 'layday'. After a leisurely cooked breakfast, we moved to the Eden wharf. The problems of having to move because of the comings and goings of commercial trawlers has all but evaporated, with over half of the Eden fleet accepting a buyout of the industry in the Government's licence buyback. The town will need to reinvent itself, but it will take time. The attitude to visitors is little changed, perhaps moving up a notch from barely-concealed contempt for any vessel with a mast to surly indifference. Their future is tourism and there is huge potential for visiting yachts to contribute to the solution, but there will need to be a change of attitude on the wharves. It is in stark contrast to the wonderful band of volunteers at the Coastal Patrol and the local service clubs, who do so much good work. The Fisherman's Club still welcomes visitors, but doesn't seem to have the atmosphere of past years – perhaps as a result of the buy

back. Anyway, we enjoyed a meal there, and watched Freo capitulate to the Swans.

The following days were devoted to the weather forecasts, with gale warnings and the approach of another front the feature of every broadcast. The occasional viewing of a weather map confirmed the reasons for such warnings, and we started to look for 'windows' rather than a period of settled weather. The equinox passed while we were waiting in Eden, so we knew that we have to take our opportunity when it arose. The problem was that the fronts were about 36 hours apart. While we enjoyed lovely weather to explore Eden, we knew bad weather was not far away. And when the fronts came, they came in hard. We were then glad of the shelter.

We considered Gabo Is as a 'last stop' anchorage, which would allow us to dash across Bass Strait without the initial 35 miles from Eden. It wasn't recommended to us in the conditions. But there is one anchorage between Eden and Gabo, and on Wednesday, after 6 nights in Eden, we headed 11 miles South to beautiful Bittangabee Creek. What a lovely spot it is, and remarkable for its shelter, given that the anchorage is only 80 metres from the breaking seas. But the entrance, even in the NE following seas, is calmed by the fortuitously placed reefs outside the entrance. There was a clear gap of non-breaking water to head for and enter. Once inside, the transformation was complete. Anchored in 3 metres of water, only 80 metres from foaming surf, we could enjoy a sundowner with no thought of spilling a drop. The beauty is sublime, the sea eagles keep a watchful eye, and the noise of the surf wills you to sleep.

Just as well, because we were up at dawn on Thursday for a dash to Babel Is (off Flinders Is). Knowing our weather window was not sufficient to reach Eddystone, we opted for the 165 miles to Babel. Bittangabee was a strategy to make it just a little bit shorter. We motor-sailed all the way, determined to beat the oncoming front which was forecast at 25-35 kts, with 45kt gusts. And we nearly made it. We thought we had 36 hours, but after 30, as we approached Babel, the weather came in SW (on the nose). The sea built quickly in the shallow waters, and an unpleasant couple of hours ensued before we

dropped anchor at Sellers Pt on Flinders Is. There is no real protection there, just a gently shoaling beach that is calm because there is no fetch. We dragged our anchor, but dug in solidly about 120 metres further out. The depth hardly altered over that distance. We stayed put, and assisted a fellow Kettering-bound boat, "Nashira", to join us. They had left Eden as we left Bittangabee Ck, but the distance mattered. It took them an extra 4-5 hours to complete the journey, with much more discomfort. Lesson to be learned – take what you can get, when it's available.

By morning, the wind had abated completely and we resumed our crossing under power, negotiating the Vansittart Shoals as we left Flinders behind. Nightfall heralded the Eddystone Pt light and a favourable NE breeze guided us down the coast, reaching Cape Tourville light just after dawn. Too easy! The beauty of Freycinet and Schouten Is welcomed us home, and we headed for Maria Is (Chinaman's Bay) for our last night.

Monday. On our last day, and exactly 2 weeks since we left Pittwater, we faced strong SW winds on our approach to the Marion Narrows. The buoy on the reef makes things so much easier now, and the leads are back in service. The shallows inside the bay are still tricky, but on a rising tide, we were able to poke along with confidence. Against a strong wind, though, it wasn't much fun, and we stopped at Dunalley for lunch, some fuel, and to hope the wind abated. With all those things satisfied, we set off through Denison Canal. The current was stronger than we expected, and the overfalls half way in were disconcerting. But, once inside, there is no way back. At the bridge, the boatspeed gap between log and GPS showed a current of 4 knots. That was manageable, though, and we progressed through, only to be released like a slingshot as the canal opened out to Norfolk Bay.

We reached DSS at 2040 hours, and headed home for our first sleeps out of bunks for a fortnight. We also enjoyed our first shower since Eden. Why don't the women want to hug us guys when we get home?

The boat performed well, the crew worked well together, and the skipper planned the trip well. What more could we want?

WANTED

A cruising yacht with crew to provide on-water checkpoint for the Australian Offshore Challenge rally on February 22nd and 23rd next year.

The event is a navigational rally for offshore power boats starting in Hobart and finishing 11 days later in Melbourne. At-sea checkpoints are required for D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Storm Bay and Port Arthur areas. One or two days involvement is requested and all expenses will be met. For more information, call or email Roger Dickeson – Ph. 0400 408 424 or roger@offshorechallenge.com.au

www.offshorechallenge.com.au

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Doncha hate it when...

Don't you just hate it when you lift your head to the breeze, and find instead that you're sailing into a strong wind? And instead of the expected gentle caress of a warm breeze, you feel the front of your cap lifting? And before a frantic hand can reach your head, you feel the whole thing rip from your head and, as you look astern, see it fast disappearing in your wake? Your boat has never before sailed so quick!

Of course, it is your favourite cap, and thus demands the highest level of emergency action to retrieve it. A figure of 8 will take us back to the exact spot, according to the textbooks, so with much flurry of sails and confusion of lines, the manoeuvre is executed. Feeling mightily pleased with ourselves, we find that we have returned to the place where the sodden cap remains half-floating just below the surface. Our seamanship allows us to bring the boat alongside, sails luffing, and we gently fall away to leeward towards our target. A perfect manoeuvre, we muse.

Then we grab the boathook, stand on the side deck and triumphantly lift the cap from the water. Oh so easy. But pride often precedes the fall. In this case, it could be a literal interpretation. Doncha hate it when the boat, now side on to the waves, lurches uncontrollably, requiring a frantic effort to maintain your balance? The 'one hand for the ship' rule, so recently forgotten, comes into play, as we cast around for any solid hand-hold. And doncha hate it when, in the confusion, the cap flies from the boathook to resume its position in the brine? And doncha hate it when a sodden cap re-enters the water, almost within reach, but sinks immediately? And don't you regret not knowing why a wet cap will sink, when a dry cap will sit on the surface for ages?

These are the mysteries that face the cruising yachtie. After we master latitude and longitude, and lift and thrust, become proficient in the rules of the road (where none exist) and comprehend a buoyage system that defies rational understanding, we are then subjected to varying laws of physics that contrive to defeat us. I lost me bloody cap! (mumble, mumble...)

NEXT MEETING

**Erika & Alan Johnson
will present a PowerPoint Presentation about
Three Hummock Island.**

**This island, off Tasmania's north west, is one of the
Hunter Group of Islands & was home to Eleanor & John Alliston
for nearly 50 years. Alan & Erika spent 6 1/2 months there last
year as caretakers, exploring the microcosm which is captured
within the island's shores.**

New Member Profile

Geoffrey Pickard

I started sailing when I was 11 years old and later began racing in keel boats ("Lemara" -Bob Wilson) for approx 7 years, winning several pennants. And then was the owner/skipper of "Charmaine" for about 15 years. I became a Foundation member and later Commodore of the Vintage Boat Club.

I bought "Alcairo" in 2003 and brought her back from Sydney where she had 3 owners in 6 years. "Alcairo was built by Noel Wilson at Port Cygnet for Peter Stubbs who cruised extensively in Tasmanian Coastal Waters. "Alcairo" has crossed Bass Strait 4 times, been to Port Davey 5 times and cruised the Furneaux Group.

She is sister to "Iolanthe II", and Kiap is built to the same design but is longer and wider.

Mike and Penny Webb

I have had extensive cruising experience for over sixty years. I still continue to enjoy the experience and offer help often to those entering the pastime. I have sailed from sheltered waters to offshore on varying types of sailing vessels and of different sizes.

I enjoy also the company of those with a similar interest.

My present boat I have had for nine years. She is simple to handle by one person if need be. Being a Compass 28 she is a safe boat under, all weather conditions I have met and despite being designed with six berths is more comfortable with just two or three aboard for cruising purposes. I have taken her a couple of times to Port Davey and once to Maria Island. She is fitted out to go offshore and be independent for a month.

Jacques Renard and Robyn Davies

I sailed for 6 years on "Seascape" in the cruising division, and for 16 years on "Kharis" in the half-ton division and also had two boats "Silva" (Hunter 19) for 6 years and "Knotje" (Hood 20) for 6 years.

I also sailed on "Lady Nelson" trips around Hobart, Bruny Island, Port Arthur and the West coast from Stanley to Hobart. and around Bruny Island on "Canimi" and to Port Davey on "Hellebore".

We bought "Solace" as our first boat together, Robyn is quite willing to learn sailing and we hope to enjoy the boat together in the Cruising Club.

I worked as a Radio Officer in the Belgian merchant marine and now work part-time as a Marine Radio Surveyor for the Marine and Safety of Tasmania (MAST).

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PRACTICAL PLUMBERS PLASTIC POSSIBILITIES -

Keith Webster

There are lots of uses for plastic tubes on board. Here are some which we've found useful on our Carter 30 Annabel Jane II.

Our headsail sheets used to catch on the deck plates which shroud rigging screws attach to. So I made an enclosing tube about 50mm dia. It had to be slit and pushed over the rigging screws then a cap cut in half glued on top with its cut at right angles to the slit. This worked fine for the slack sheet dragging at deck level, but the tensioned sheet dragged on the shroud wire higher up. You often see tubes placed there. It's easy if slipped on at rigging time but later you have to slit the tube to get on. I found that I could use the jig saw to make a spiral cut split which can be forced over the wire. The trick is to successively break a little off the end of the jigsaw blade until its just long enough to cut through one side of the tube without hitting the other side on its full extension. You lay the tube on a flat surface and slowly rotate it as you run the jigsaw along.

Galley convenience is a big part of cruising. In Ian Nicolson's book "Marinize your boat" I saw an idea for a coffee mug holder which is made by gluing four rings about 10mm high onto a board. The rings are slices of plastic tube which just enclose the bottom of your coffee mugs. You make the drinks and pass up to the cockpit the whole set at once. In our case there is a spot behind the stove where it sits on brackets with dowel locaters so you just pour straight from the kettle.

The last example is a bit more techie, requiring some electrical soldering and all that.

A few years ago when we had just purchased Annabel Jane II, the first voyage was a delivery from Pittwater to Swansea thence Lake Macquarie. So we fuelled up for the trip by pouring diesel into the deck filler until it gurgled up and then receded a bit. So we put a bit more and a bit more... but what was happening was that the diesel was bleeding out the vent tube which is high under the cockpit floor and

making a smelly mess in the bilge. I decided then that a basic need of fuel instrumentation is to know when the tank is nearly full.

I didn't much like the cost of buying a fuel tank level gauge instrument so thought of DIY ways to achieve the same effect. Besides, the 'nearly full' point there is possibly more drama to be had if you don't know when it's 'nearly empty'. In the case of this boat the tank is under the cockpit floor and a dipstick couldn't be lifted out and would be hard to reach at sea. It would also be hard to get a view of a clear tube to show fuel level, so I thought of electrical methods to give two points of indication, one at about 90% and one at about 25%. When we notice the low LED out, we know we have about 10litre or 5 hours motor-ing left.

The system to do this uses a float with a magnet which passes by two reed switches. Reed switches are a switch responding to a magnetic field, widely used in home security systems on doors and windows. In our case, the fuel tank is rectangular and about 400mm high. The reed switches can be obtained at, for example, Jaycar or Radio Parts and should be the smallest ones, having the reed switch and the magnet enclosed in plastic. The reed switch has to be the type which has the contact closed when the magnet is near. Because there is some ambiguity in the terms 'normally open' and 'normally closed' when used in the security industry, it is best to get the store to prove the action to you.

The other parts are made from plastic plumbing tube about 25 mm dia, with wood or caps to plug the ends and some epoxy bog or car bog. For the float you need a piece of plastic tube which will slide inside the other tube. The steps to make one are:-

1. Make the float by plugging both ends of the narrow tube well sealed with epoxy and bog the magnet inside at one end. Our float is about 100mm long. The test for the float is for it to float in kerosene, about the same S.G. as diesel.

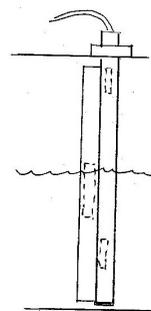
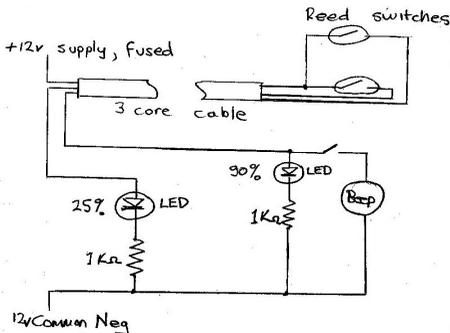
2. Take two lengths of the larger tube, one of length equal to the tank height, one a bit longer to stick out the top of the tank, and glue them

together. The shorter one needs to have a small gap from the bottom to let the diesel in and out. The longer one is plugged at the bottom.

4. Make a thin wood wafer eg plywood, which will fit down the plugged tube and glue the two reed switches on it. It is prudent to establish the positions first by temporary fixing the switches and testing in a laundry bowl with water. The bottom one needs to correspond to the magnet position when the float is sitting on the bottom. Since the magnet is at the top of an eg 100 mm float, the tank level when this switch is activated will be about 90 mm, for our tank corresponding to just below 25%. The top one can be just below the tank top. If it is possible for the float to rise past the upper switch position, you need to stop it by having a s/s wire pin across the tube containing the float else the top LED will go out for a full tank. The switch wires can be extended via 3-core cable because one wire from each is joined.

5. Mount the assembly in the tank. I cut a hole in the top of the tank and made a clamp grip of the longer tube. This permits a bit of up and down position adjustment.

6. Make up a little panel with two LED's and a switch and beeper, to the circuit in the diagram. The switch puts the beeper in circuit to the upper reed switch so you can fill away until you hear the beep, then stop filling in time, then you turn the beep off. You have to get the LED's and the beeper the right way round. LED's are not harmed if given the wrong polarity so experimenting is OK. The beeper will usually have red black wires.



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**Also available are lapel badges, cloth badges
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Great Christmas presents!!

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Albert Ross has had a letter from a poor sailor

Here's my subs, please receipt and record it
For my wife all my spending does audit
I regret the red dot
Bui I'm building a yacht
So you see, I can scarcely afford it!

And another who suffered a rather uncomfortable voyage

Lying straight in bed

Good crew are hard to find; so you would expect skippers to look after them. But what about a skipper that tells his newly-arrived crew that the assigned bunk has a sloping problem, that meant the crew would have to defy gravity to sleep soundly each night or off-watch.

Good crew, being both gullible and accommodating, take skippers at their word on such things and put up with such minor difficulties - even ingenuously rigging 'lee cloths' to avoid unceremonious dumpings during the night. And so it went for a fortnight. On the last day, however, the skipper tired, and went for a lie-down on the sloping bunk. Finding the bunk not up to his usual palatial standards in the aft cabin, he poked and prodded at the cushion, and discovered an interesting thing. It had a more solid piece of foam on one side. And he found that, by turning the cushion around, it provided not only a level bed, but a firm outer part of the cushion to better contain the sleeper. Oh, wasn't the crew pleased to find that he too could have slept well during the past fortnight. Oh, how he laughed. And wasn't it kind of the skipper to point it out as we approached port on the final leg of the journey. Timing is everything.