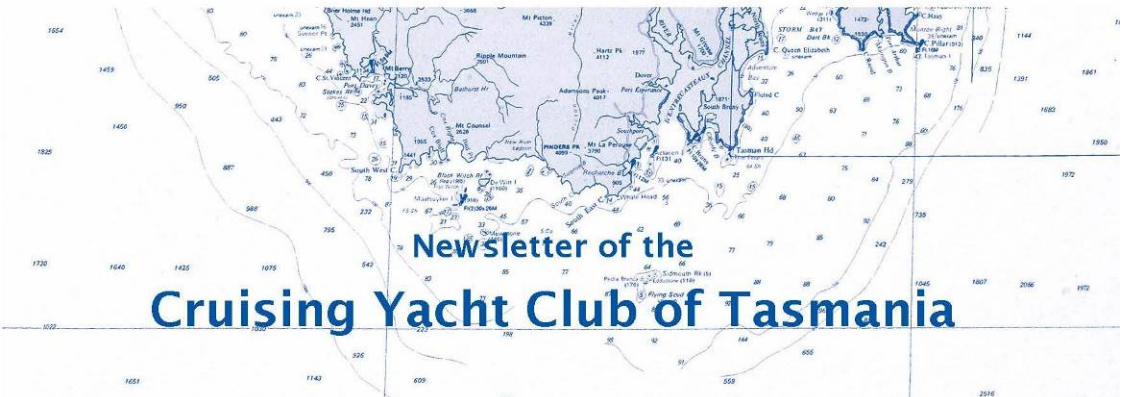


Albatross

Volume 35 No 2 March 2009



The scene at Kings Pier, Hobart, during the Wooden Boat Festival, February 2009 Photo: Chris Palmer



Newsletter of the
Cruising Yacht Club of Tasmania

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CYCT Calendar

March - Tue 3rd

General Meeting – DSS at 8.00pm

Commodore Leo Foley and John Greenhill will describe their recent voyage from Darwin to Langkawi, Malaysia, on board *Alamak*.

March - Wed 4th

Mid-week cruise

Meet at Kettering (Oyster Cove Chandlery) at 10.00 hrs.

March - Sat 7th to Mon 9th

Cruise – Port Cygnet Regatta

See Vice Commodore’s Report for details.

March - Wed 11th

Mid-week cruise

Meet at Kettering (Oyster Cove Chandlery) at 10.00 hrs.

March - Weds 11th

Committee Meeting – Mariners Cottage at 7.30pm

March - Wed 18th

Mid-week cruise

Meet at Kettering (Oyster Cove Chandlery) at 10.00 hrs.

April - Wed 1st

Mid-week cruise

Meet at Kettering (Oyster Cove Chandlery) at 10.00 hrs.

April - Sat 4th – Sun 5th

Barnes Bay Regatta

April - Tue 7th

General Meeting – DSS at 8.00pm

Details to follow

April - Fri 10th – Mon 13th Easter

Cruise – Bruny Circumnavigation.

See Vice Commodore Report for more information.

April - Wed 15th

Mid-week cruise

Meet at Kettering (Oyster Cove Chandlery) at 10.00 hrs.

April - Weds 15th

Committee Meeting – Mariners Cottage at 7.30pm



*James Craig off Taroona on a typical Hobart 'summer' day
Photo: Dave Davey*

Editorial



My goodness, the months go by quickly!

It seems that barely is one issue of Albatross put to bed before the next demands attention. Maybe it's just me getting older. Or perhaps, as I like to think, it's because Tasmania has so much to offer us cruising folk that we are spending all our time on our boats. And as we know, time passes pretty quickly in that situation.

With the aid of friends, I have been making major modifications to the cabin of *Margaret Ellen* (soon to be renamed – more on that anon) and I now have standing headroom and a much more practical dinette arrangement for eating and socialising. With luck, that will translate to more time on the water.

Our first outing after these modifications took place a couple of days ago with some American guests for company. All went very well, contributing to the wonderful time we have been enjoying with these folk (whom I hadn't seen for 34 years!) over the last week or two, and their very positive impressions of Tasmania. They have been instructed to tell no-one how good it is here!

This month's newsletter has another installment of *Aurielle's* saga, this time covering the trip back to NZ. Plus we have a most interesting article from Helen Stewart about life in Penang. You can say Hi to Helen and Phil at a barbecue they have organised at the Waterworks Reserve on Saturday 21st March. See inside for details.

Entries for the Geat Albatross Quiz have been trickling in, and I hope that by the deadline of Sunday 1st March, more will arrive. If you haven't had a go, start Googling and be in the running for the prize.

Articles and comments are always welcome. In particular we need a few more proud owners to contribute to the 'My Boat' series. Every boat has a story – tell us yours.

Finally, and early reminder of the Navigation Cruise on 9th May. Set it aside, brush up on your chart reading skills, and make sure you take part in what is always a most enjoyable day out.

Happy cruising

Chris Palmer
editor@cycet.org.au

Commodore's Comments



Warm Summer days allow us to spend more time on the water, and to enjoy this magical time in Tasmania. The variety of events around Hobart during January and February provide a myriad of choices, and it's a real effort to choose between them. Sometimes, its best just to put block-time aside with 'boat' scribbled against it.

The Wooden Boat Festival continues to be a highlight, showcasing all that is special about Hobart and its boating history. Owners can be proud of their contribution to the spectacle, but for them, it's no chore; it's an enjoyable weekend catching up with

friends and like-minded people. Providing entertainment and a visual feast for others is a side-benefit. Well done to all the Club members who were involved as owners, exhibitors, and particularly to the volunteers who made it such a well-run and friendly affair.

During the weekend, CYCT hosted a barbeque for members of the Coastal Cruising Club of Australia, our sister Club in Sydney. More than 50 people attended the Saturday evening BBQ, and we thank DSS for the use of their facilities. It seemed to work well all round, with closer ties forged between CCCA and CYCT, and DSS getting good bar trade on a quiet weekend for them. Supporting other Clubs is benefiting boating generally, and that fits with our Club's objectives, so I'm keen to develop closer ties with DSS and the other local Clubs.

Port Cygnet Regatta is our next planned cruise, and provides another opportunity to support another Club, so it would be pleasing to have a good attendance. That's not hard, as the Port Cygnet Sailing Club generally puts on a fun-filled weekend, full of good cheer and friendly off-water socializing. I'll see you there!



Vice Commodore's Report



This month's report has been prepared while *Reflections* is anchored off Trousers Point Beach, Flinders Island.

We have been in the Furneaux Group for a week and have enjoyed good weather (all of the coastal waters forecasts have commenced with "Warnings: Nil" since we left!).

The RYCT Circumnavigation Cruise has moved on along the north coast and Jose and Conchita have completed their own circumnavigation in *Odyssey III*. I'm looking forward to hearing about their experiences

when we get back.

March 7-9 Port Cygnet

For information about the Port Cygnet Regatta, see the web site <http://www.cygnetsailing.org.au>.

A rough plan is to make your own way down on (or by) Saturday evening and go to the PCSC BBQ. On Sunday evening we will arrange to meet somewhere in the area (Copper Alley Bay or nearby) and have a CYCT BBQ. Call *Reflections* on VHF 16 if you are in doubt about the destination.

April 10-12 Easter – Around Bruny

Hopefully this will come off this year! Either Adventure Bay or Partridge Island for Friday night, depending on which way round we go, then to Cloudy Bay.

Sunday April 26th – day trip

Destination unspecified, possibly Mary Ann Bay to entice some boats from Hobart to come along.

Donald Sutherland Memorial Navigation Cruise, Sat May 9th

I can't wait to see what last years winners have in store for us this year! We will meet up somewhere for lunch on the Sunday for those who are out for the weekend.

Members Cruising Plans

I don't have any new information about members' cruises.

If you are planning an extended cruise to these or other destinations and would like to see whether others have similar plans, contact me or send an email

query to members@cyc.t.org.au. This contacts all members who have an email address and is a good way to exchange this type of information.

Happy cruising,

Andrew Boon

Rear Commodore's Report



During February we enjoyed two relaxing and very bonding barbecues – first our annual February get-together barbecue normally held in place of that month's general Meeting, where Members enjoyed the twilight beauty of the gardens embracing Mariner's Cottage and secondly, our hosting of a welcome barbecue for our mates from the NSW based Coastal Cruising Club of Australia, visiting Hobart for the Australian Wooden Boat Festival. Old friendships were renewed and new ones made.

Our March General Meeting will be at 8pm on Tuesday March 3rd at DSS. The speaker will be our Commodore, Leo Foley, assisted by John Greenhill, who will narrate their experiences sailing *Alamak* through Asian waters.

Regards

Merv Page

Aurielle – Back to New Zealand

Sue and John Cerutty

John's last newsletter left you all in American Samoa waiting for a weather window to head back to Western Samoa. A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then (pardon the pun) but as John is engrossed in creating another centreboard and a hard top dodger for *Aurielle* at the moment I thought I would help you sail back to New Zealand with us. For all you helmsmen out there you will have to wait until John is home again to ask about the technical details of

the trips as actual wind strengths and directions are not high on my list of 'must remembers'!!

The sail from American Samoa to Western Samoa took 12 hours and was not one of my most memorable crossings. My log notes read "reef in, reef out, little jib out, big jib out, some rain squalls and a tiny bit of sunshine". Needless to say, because we had the wind on our stern quarter John really enjoyed himself! Our stop in Western Samoa was quite brief this time, just long enough to reprovision. Fortunately for us the four days that we were there coincided with the Tuillia Festival. Tuillia is the Samoan name for the Ginger Lily. They are in full flower at this time of year and their riotous colours are magnificent. During the festival we were treated to a night of entertainment watching each



Students from Don Bosco College winning the Tuillia Festival long-boat race.

Samoan village perform a traditional song and dance. It appeared as if the whole village took part as the stage was totally overflowing for each performance. I must say I have never seen such graceful and beautifully dressed women as the Western Samoan ladies. We also

watched the South Pacific Fire Dancing Competition - very agile young men from Fiji, both Samoa's and New Zealand did amazing gymnastics first with one fire stick, then with two fire sticks and finally joining the two sticks together and dancing with one long one. It was truly an awesome sight. We were due to leave Apia early on the Thursday morning, but as we headed into town to get the last of our fresh veggies we saw a huge crowd gathering on the esplanade. They were waiting for the finish of the long boats final race. These boats are designed like the Maori War Canoes and are rowed by around fifty people per boat. We got caught up in the excitement and stayed to watch as well. The friendly Samoan lady who kindly translated what was happening told us that her son was rowing in one of the boats. He was a student at the Don Bosco College and these young men had dedicated themselves to intensive training every day after school for the last three or four months. Their dedication paid off as they won the race by a very convincing margin.

After the race we threw off the mooring lines and left the harbour intending to sail down to the second of the Western Samoan Islands and spend a couple of days there before heading to Fiji, but Mother Nature and our noon time departure had other ideas for us. A couple of very vicious rain squalls slowed us down for a while which in turn caused us to reach our reef entrance coordinates just on sunset which is not the ideal time to enter a new harbour,

especially the reef variety. After a crew meeting we decided that the best option would be to keep on sailing to Fiji. The moon was full and the weather predictions for the next few days looked as if I would finally get my 'wind behind me' crossing. The decision turned out to be a good one and the sail across to Fiji was quite enjoyable. The night watches were especially rewarding

as I have never seen such a lovely lot of stars and was given the special treat of seeing a really vivid falling star that left a sparkling trail of lights as if fell. John's fish-providing ability turned up trumps on this crossing too with him landing three lovely big



Aurielle in Suva Suva, Fiji

Mahi Mahi. We arrived at Savu Savu on the Fijian island of Vanua Levu three days after leaving Apia.

We were greeted by Pat Price who had sailed *Pendulum* straight there from Nuiatoputapu, the top island of Tonga. We spent a few enjoyable days there with Pat and Penny before heading out again on the 17th September. We sailed down the southern coast of Vanua Levu, stopping off at a couple of anchorages before turning north west to the island of Yadua. Strong winds meant that we stayed at Yadua Island for the next five days or so. Yadua harbour was a very deep indent and thus quite protected from the strong winds. The harbour itself had three little beaches and one big main beach, plus a wonderful fringing reef that gave us many hours of enjoyment either snorkelling or drifting over it on our kayaks.

The weather in the harbour was such that John was even able to dust the cobwebs off his sailboard and provide all the yachts at anchor with some alternate amusement! By this time we had made friends with a New Zealand couple, Steve and Carol on the yacht *Harlech* and an American/New Zealand couple, Tom & Christine on the yacht *Mahaurangi* and discovered that their destinations and time frames were similar to ours, so with the weather on the improve we left Yadua Island in company with them and headed west across Bligh Waters to the chain of Fijian islands known as The Yasawas.

This was where our Fijian experience really started. Tom and Christine had travelled this way a few times before so they were able to initiate us ‘first timers’ into the Fijian rite of Sevu-Sevu. This tradition requires visitors to an island to first present a gift of Yagona Roots (the stuff that is ground down to make Kava) to the Chief to ask his permission to visit the village or walk the beaches. We found the Yasawa Islands delightful, with lovely sandy beaches for walking on (and collecting shells from) crystal clear waters which demanded that you just jump off the stern immediately upon anchoring and wonderfully friendly people who were more than happy to stop and talk to you.



Strong trade winds!

This all sounds very idyllic but in actual fact I found Fiji to be a navigator’s nightmare with charts inaccurate and quite a few reefs not charted at all. To quote Pat Price “there are only two types of cruisers in Fiji – those who have touched a reef and those who are about to” Well, half way down the Yasawa chain *Aurielle* joined the former group. We had left our anchorage early one morning as the wind had swung and the darkening clouds indicated that it was going to get stronger. If it swung much more we would be on a lee shore. The decision was to up anchor and head down the coast a little to the anchorage known as Blue Lagoon.

We headed out into a very steep sharp chop with *Harlech* close behind. Once we turned the corner and headed down the coast things settle down a little so I took up my usual Fiji navigation spot in the companionway calling up positions to John who would then eyeball my information. Half an hour into our journey something didn’t gel and John swung the wheel hard to starboard, but not quick enough and I heard an ominous crunch. Unfortunately, or fortunately, we had the centreboard down so the only damage was to that and it acted as it should and crumpled up without damaging our hull.

Harlech was behind us and managed to swerve away in time but he too said that his charts indicated noting untoward in the area! To cut a long story short. *Aurielle* sails just as well without the centreboard, just a slight sideways drift when we are on the wind, but remember that John had promised no windward stuff this trip, so all was fine!!! Steve kindly offered the use of his sizeable workshop when we reached New Zealand so John spent the remainder of the trip drawing up plans of a new centreboard and while he was about it the plans for a hard top dodger as well.

Our next stop after the Yasawa Group was to Vuda Point Marina on the main Fijian island of Viti Levu. Here we once again met up with Pat and *Pendulum* plus a few other familiar faces. Vuda Point Marina is on of the gathering places for cruisers before setting off for NZ or Australia at the end of a cruising season. We had a couple of days to clean up and reprovision before our daughter Angela and her friend Lucy came to spend two weeks of their holiday with us. They



Pendulum enjoying the tropics

arrived at 6.15am and it was reported that I woke the whole marina with my screams of delight when Angie flashed her left hand under my nose displaying a brand new one day old engagement ring. I was going to finally get to be a Mother in Law!!!!

The two weeks with the girls flew by. The weather was tropically gorgeous for the whole time so that the girls were able to fulfil their wish of being at a tropical island and just veg out and swim every day. We took them to Musket Cove on Mololo Island where they were able to see and enjoy the 'rich' resort style of Fijian holiday plus visit the most delightful little sand cay with

the finest patch of snorkelling delights that I have come across for quite a while. The day we farewelled the girls we also welcomed aboard Karen and Maurice Crawford, two Tassie friends of ours who wanted to do the crossing to New Zealand with us. We were able to show them the delights of Mololo Island and the sand cay before the weather window that we had all been waiting for arrived. We sailed out of Navula Pass at 10.30am on Tuesday 28th October a day behind *Harlech* and *Pendulum*. *Harlech* was leading the way to New Zealand while Pat was heading straight for Coffs Harbour Australia.

After the Tas Coast Sked that night we had a chat to both of them and they both reported that they were in the middle of some awful weather. *Harlech* was about 100 miles ahead of us and *Pendulum* was about the same distance away to the North West. We were pleased to have the early warning as the weather was just a local phenomenon, nothing on the weather faxes showed anything untoward so we would have sailed into it sometime in the wee small

hours of the night. Suffice to say we were ready for it, but as usual strong winds are something that you just put up with and hope they don't last long.

Once we were in it and had set *Aurielle* up to handle the conditions it wasn't as bad as we imagined it would be, just bumpy, noisy and unpleasant for a few hours. Once the winds passed us by the passage actually settled down to be one of the better crossings we have had.

We were actually reaching!!!!

The only downside was that we were heading South and every day saw us all with yet another layer of clothing or thicker socks on.



On passage to NZ. Karen the Chef of the Day

We reached New Zealand at 2.30am on the 4th November having travelled 1100n.miles in six and a half days. John was feeling very pleased with our performance. Karen and Maurice said that they enjoyed themselves but thought that they would stick to cruising the Australian Coast in their soon to be launched Catamaran. Once the clearing in formalities were over we spent



A happy crew celebrating at Opus, New Zealand

the last two weeks of Karen and Maurice's holidays showing them our favourite anchorages in the Bay of Islands before sailing down to Whangarei where they left us to catch a bus to Auckland for two days in the big smoke before flying back to Tassie.

Which brings me to my opening sentence, saying that John is preoccupied with the creation of the new centreboard and hard dodger. Steve and Carol live in the next suburb to the Town Basin Marina where we have installed *Aurielle*.

Our next year's cruising is in the lap of the gods. We would like to re visit Fiji and then on to Vanuatu before returning to the Australian coast but if the Fijian Government doesn't change their Nine Month Revisiting rule we will most probably head to New Caledonia before Vanuatu. As usual with all cruising plans they are open to change depending on conversations, weather, rules, imagination etc!!!

Fair winds for the coming year to all CYCT members.



Deep Cove, Cape Brett, Bay of Islands, NZ.

Cruising the South Pacific with the Island Cruising Association

From David McKay

The following article was sent unsolicited to the Editor, and may be of interest to CYCT members contemplating a cruise to the Pacific. The printing this article does not constitute an endorsement of the Island Cruising Association by the Editor or the CYCT and members must judge the contents for themselves. If nothing else, it provides an interesting counterpoint to the article from Sue Cerutti that precedes it.

David and Andrea McKay are medical practitioners based in Sydney. Diomedea is their second yacht and has previously made trips to Lord Howe Island, Flinders Island in Bass Strait, along the Australian coast as far as the Whitsundays, as well as competing in the 2005 Sydney to Hobart race. Editor.

Andrea and I sailed our 48 foot steel Van de Stadt yacht *Diomedea* amongst the islands of the South Pacific during the winter of 2008. After leaving Sydney to cross the Tasman Sea in April, *Diomedea* arrived in Opua, Bay of Islands where we met John and Lyn Martin, directors of the Island Cruising Association. We had joined the ICA so that we could participate in a rally from New Zealand to Tonga in May. We were provided with a wealth of information and support

prior to departure from Opua, including seminars on weather, safety, passage making, boat preparation and so forth. Membership of ICA also provided significant discounts on chandlery and other purchases. Our clearance out of NZ was made very easy and quick. Duty free food, alcohol and fuel purchases were facilitated. We arrived in Tonga some six days later and anchored at the beautiful Pangaimotu Island near the capital of Tonga. All clearing in procedures were done very speedily on the island as opposed to having to tie up to the filthy, rough and rat infested docks of the harbour. The ICA had organised for the officials to come to us. A series of social events allowed us to begin establishing friendships that would last for the next six months and some of them for much longer. We also soon learned of the skill base available in the fleet of 20 yachts, giving us a sense of security should things go pear shaped. Cruising through the archipelago of Tonga was done independently for all participants but the option of meeting up at various anchorages was always available if desired. There was no fixed agenda when 'in country'. Real insider advice pertaining to the islands was given during chart marking sessions

As we had to meet friends in Fiji, we left Tonga independently and what had now become the Pacific Circuit Rally followed us about a week later. In Savusavu, the rally organisers gave us a one hour practical on how to do "sevusevu" with local chiefs in the villages we were to visit. Highly entertaining and useful. We eventually regrouped with the rally at Musket Cove in western Fiji in July in preparation for the passage to Vanuatu. Our week at Musket Cove was marvellous with organised and impromptu social events. Group activities such as scuba diving became easily achievable. Customs clearance was again smoothed with the ICA bringing out the relevant officials to the island, sparing us the considerable bother of having to sail back to the mainland. *Diomedea* sailed to the island of Tanna in Vanuatu. Here, entry was streamlined by officials coming to Port Resolution rather than us spending a ghastly day bouncing in the tray of a 4WD across the island. We then had a marvellous cruise the length of Vanuatu, sporadically meeting rally boats at delightful tradewind anchorages.

The jewel in the crown of ICA organisation was yet to reveal itself however. With the rally increased to 39 boats, we departed Port Vila for the island of Ouvea 180nm away in the French Loyalty group of New Caledonia. Ouvea is not a clearance port but for us it all happened and we could stay at this, the most beautiful of all South Pacific destinations. Normally cruisers have to go to the capital Noumea, 2-3 days away. Those wishing to cruise Ouvea and nearby islands then have to make the return trip. Alas, our stay in French waters was limited and time came for *Diomedea* to return to Australia. We said our farewells to our friends and had an easy five day passage from Noumea to Coffs Harbour, arriving in early October. Those that remained in New Caledonia cruised around the Grand Terre and then down to Ile de Pins before

heading for either New Zealand or Australia. The leg to New Zealand was an "All Points" rally with cash/goods prizes at the end.

The mix of yachts in the rally was interesting. About half were NZ registered. Of these, most were just having six months off but some were using the rally as a springboard into their world circumnavigation. Of the other half, a few were from Australia. The rest were from all over the world, having arrived in NZ as part of their ongoing circumnavigation. Boats from the UK, Europe, US were well represented.

Whilst one could do this entire cruise independently, Andrea and I felt that the 'cruise in company' method worked particularly well. At an organisational level, a great deal of time and angst was saved. Costs were reduced in many areas. Advice and support was readily available and made many things achievable for us, being relative novices to cruising in these waters. Personally I learned a great deal from John and Lyn as well as from other rally participants. The camaraderie was fantastic. One night, *Diomedea* came into Havannah harbour after a 75nm leg to windward in 25 knot winds. Rather to our surprise, a dinghy from one of the rally boats quickly appeared at our stern and we were whisked over for a BBQ that was already in progress. The perfect coda for a hard day's sailing. We partied until late before a good sleep.

Would I go with Island Cruising Association again in the future? Absolutely. Was it cost effective? Beyond doubt. Was it fun? You bet.

Details about ICA can be found at: <http://www.islandcruising.co.nz>

Their rally program is available for 2009.

David McKay
DavidLMcKay@bigpond.com

Penang Story

From Helen Stewart

After cruising through Indonesia for three months in 2007 on the Sail Indonesia Rally, we arrived in Malaysia just in time as our cruising permits had expired. We were travelling in company with a number of other boats with whom we'd come through Indonesia. One of them we'd towed for several days when their gearbox failed and another who may have needed a tow because they had a dodgy propshaft strut which had been welded up on the beach at an Indonesian

Island. For several months we based ourselves at Sebana Cove Resort Marina in Johor, Malaysia's southern-most state.



Meridian basking in tropical Thai sunshine

We visited Singapore, anchoring at Johor Baru, sailed down around Singapore and up the west coast of Malaysia calling in at various islands in the Malacca Straits, plus Port Dickson, Penang and Langkawi, then stopped and played

at some of the beautiful Thai islands in the Andaman Sea along the way, finishing this leg of our journey at Phuket. We had Hobart friends, Robbie and John, aboard from Port Dickson to Phuket sharing the adventure.

We caught the cable car at Langkawi; it soared so steeply up the hill it was truly breathtaking. At Ko Muk we swam through the dark tunnel of Morakot Cave into a hong (limestone sinkhole inside an island) and emerged on a beach that was in the sinkhole, with cliffs several hundred feet high all around us. We visited Ko Phi Phi Don, one of the Thai islands that were devastated by the Boxing Day tsunami in 2004. About six-thousand people were killed there. It is a beautiful island and the people were very friendly. That was where, when I was pulling the anchor up, we



Entrance to Morakot Cave, swim-through access to Ko Muk's 360degree "hong".

found a huge snaggle of concrete block, mooring lines, anchor rodes, anchors and other nasties. Phil and another yachtie had to cut the hawse line that we'd neatly caught with the hook of the CQR with a saw and let it go. It would have sunk the tender if he'd been able to get it aboard. And it was the same anchorage where, the day before, some yachties came and introduced

themselves and handed us a copy of a New Zealand cruising magazine with an article featuring us and several other boats. We'd been interviewed in Darwin and forgotten about it until then.

We made our way to Phuket, clearing in at Ao Chalong in the south of the island then headed up to Yacht Haven Marina. After several weeks at Yacht Haven I left life on the high seas for a six month adventure in Thailand. I went to Chiang Mai in northern Thailand for a month's training and then caught an overnight train to Bangkok where I taught English as a second language in a private Catholic school. My time in Bangkok was busy, exciting and very tiring (teachers, one and all, I salute you!). Phil came to Chiang Mai with me and spent a few days there riding elephants and soaking



Dino, a 37-year-old elephant took us for a ride at an elephant camp near Chiang Mai. He loved sugar cane and bananas

up Thai military history before returning to the boat. His daughter, Joanna, then joined him for a fortnight and they continued cruising through the exotic

limestone islands of Phang Nga Bay, snorkelling, swimming, eating seafood, socialising...



Meanwhile, I tackled prepositions, pronouns and stative verbs with four classes of secondary school students. I taught grammar, comprehension and conversation plus health and geography to year 7 and year 9 Thai students who came to

school in Beemers and Hondas. We came to school in song thaeows (little

trucks with seats on the back tray). My first S1 (year 7) health class for the term was human reproduction, at 8.15am on Monday morning. Nothing like jumping in at the deep end, but fortunately the first Monday was a public holiday so I had some time up my sleeve to prepare! I made a PowerPoint presentation and had a find-a-word ready to help everyone get comfortable with the vocabulary! The students were very typical of children their age and we had fun, worked hard and most of the time I really enjoyed them. I had a lot of fun with the other two women with whom I shared an apartment building, travelled and worked, plus some of our other colleagues and those who completed the course with me. We had weekends away, went to Khao Sahn Road in Bangkok, found the best Indian restaurant in the whole country (Bangkok Blues), played with baby elephants, visited Kanchanaburi and the excellent Thailand Burma Death Railway centre there, walked across the bridge over the River Kwai, met an Indian guru who told us our fortunes and then asked for money, learnt to speak a bit of Thai and I ended my time in Thailand by travelling south to Butterworth, to reunite with Phil, on another overnight train.



An English grammar class at Kasintorn Academy, Bangkhuae, Bangkok. Vivaporn and Mukarin in front row and Surasawadee smiling in second row.

But I digress – back to Phil and Meridian in Thailand. When Jo left, Phil single-handed back to Langkawi and settled in at Rebak Resort (just off Langkawi). After a couple of months of rest and recreation he dragged himself away from marina-life and returned to Penang. Meridian was hauled out with the intention of antifouling and painting the decks. When she was on the hard, the enthusiastic works manager advised Phil to have the hull grit blasted, which was,

in retrospect a good idea (even now). There begins the saga. The list of jobs grew and so did the length of time they took to be done.

Re the highlights on the hard: grit blast hull; remove (with jackhammer) a tonne of concrete ballast, which was causing serious rust (hence the replating) in the bow hull area as the concrete had been poured against the steel hull, from the forward bilge (so the bathroom had to go); replace with concrete-filled heavy duty PVC pipes with metal aggregate for additional weight (the world spot price for lead was astronomical); replate various sections of hull; (here continues the saga because sometime during the fairing process something

went wrong and some lumps started to grow in the fairing compound and the boatyard is now removing the paint to investigate the problem further.

The problem was identified in December but due to about three weeks worth of intervening public holidays they are only now in mid-Feb sanding three coats of black paint off the topsides, which we had applied after being dissatisfied with the job they did; rebuild the bathroom including new grey-water sump with automatic pump; repair the damage to plumbing caused by the jackhammer operators during aforementioned ballast removal; remove the engine, replace engine mounts with nice flexible ones, replace and realign said engine with flexible coupling; have a

new stainless steel pulpit built and fitted; reinstall bowsprit; remove, repaint and re-rig the mast and boom, rewire mast; nearly rewire the rest of the boat as well; replace defunct/tired equipment with nice shiny new things that I have to learn how to use; relocate the gas bottles to the stern and replumb, including the barbecue; replace the dodger



'dashboard' with one that has instruments fitted to it; clean diesel tanks and install inspection openings, repaint decks and coachhouse; remove all brightwork, sand and refit; install the new sheet winches that we bought in Brisbane in 2006; regalvanise anchor; etcetera

So here we are, still on the hard and living at LBM (Limbongan Batu Maung) a Malaysian boatyard in Penang. (limbongan means dockyard, Batu Maung is the place) is on the south-eastern corner of Penang. There are 740,000 people who live on this little island and many of them ride motorbikes. Most of them live in high rise apartments but there are traditional Malay villages and suburbs as well. Some of them commute to mainland Seberang Prai (near Butterworth) to work, and there are plenty who come the other way. They travel via the Penang Bridge or vehicular ferries very reminiscent of the Bruny Island ferry. We are living 25km south of the centre of Georgetown, near the village of Taman Iping and westerners are few and far between down here. There is a Tuesday night-market and we are often the only westerners there. The market sells food, fruit and vegetables, clothes and bits and pieces.

Georgetown, Penang's capital, has a rich, interesting and multicultural history as a centre for trade on the shipping route connecting east and west. The ships

don't call in much these days but tourists are certainly finding their way to Georgetown. The main drawcards are the colonial streetscapes, Chinese shophouses, Little India, traditional crafts, the Thai Consulate for Thai visas and food, food, food. The food reflects the Indian, Chinese, Malay and Baba Nyonya cultures with some Thai for good measure; and some restaurants even sell western food for the cautious or homesick tourist. Street food stalls and many restaurants sell tasty local meals for RM4 or 5, which makes for a cheap and cheerful meal for \$1.70 to \$2.20. We were spoilt when we arrived in Malaysia because the exchange rate was 3 ringgit to the dollar, now it's down to 2.3.

I keep mentioning food because it really is one of the highlights of being here. Street food is cheap, delicious and available just about everywhere. Right from the time we arrived in Kupang, West Timor, we have been blessed with a wonderful array of food. I've had 'Bali belly' three times and each time it was from a 'real' restaurant, (once even in Bali) not a street stall. At Taman Iping's night-market the range is delicious: curries, satays, fried chicken, barbecued chicken, fish, roti (Indian flatbread cooked on a grill), murtabak (a folded roti with diced chicken in the middle served with curry sauce or dahl), rice and noodle dishes and exotic cakes and coloured drinks at our market. Even along the north-south motorway on Penang there are numerous food stalls set up on the roadside park strip that runs between the beach and road. They specialise in one or two dishes and trade from early morning until very late. It's fascinating to see how the operators fit cooking equipment, water drums, tables, chairs, generator, plates, cups, eskies and so on all on the back of a one-and-a-half tonne flat tray truck.

Penang really is multicultural. There is a procession of religious and cultural community events that continues for about four months from around October and well into the new year (our calendar). Starting with Hari Raya, which marks the end of Rammadan, the celebration continues with Deepavali for the Hindu, a couple of other Muslim special days, Christmas, New Year, Chinese New Year (this year 26 January) and hot on its heels is Thaipusam, another Hindu festival. These are all celebrated in fine style, with anything from street parades, fireworks, open-houses, stalls, food festivals and public festivities generally.

There are public holidays for every occasion which is interesting because Malaysia is predominantly a Muslim country. We've seen chingay parades (10m-long poles with huge silk banners balanced on the shoulder or chin, and expertly tossed from one man to another with some acrobatics thrown in for extra effect, (lesson learnt: always take your camera with you) Chinese lion dancers winking at us, eaten sumptuous fare for Chinese New Year's day, seen whole barbecued pigs en masse displayed on tables in the street, as well as having lots of fun with other cruisers.

People are one of the elements that make this cruising life so special. We've made some wonderful friends along the way and caught up with people from home as well. We had a lovely visit from Cmdr Leo Foley when he arrived in Penang a couple of months ago. It was so good to hear about his adventures coming through SE Asia and we are enjoying the Vegemite™! My two sisters came and spent eight days in Langkawi in November and it was fun to have them in our world for a little while.

There is a canteen here at LBM which caters for the workers and has wifi internet access – it's free. The woman who runs it is becoming a friend and her 11-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son are special. With her faltering English and my poor Bahasa Malaysia we manage to communicate quite well, and we certainly enjoy trying.

LBM is off the beaten track a bit and the bus service is reliable but slow and inconvenient for accessing supermarkets and hardware shops, let alone a bit of a night out on the town. We use a motorbike to overcome this problem.



Approaching the Malaysia-Thai border near Betong, Thailand

We have a 100cc Modenas Kriss (very common in Malaysia but probably unseen on Australian roads) and we fit in nicely at the traffic lights. Here, motosikals thread through the traffic to the front at every set of traffic lights. There is space at the lights for them/us and we are expected to race off ahead of the cars, and in some places there are even dedicated lanes. Cars and trucks are generally very

courteous towards us and we buzz along nicely. You get used to people riding up the wrong side of the road in your lane, double-parked cars in main roads at peak hour, cars edging out halfway across the intersection forcing their way in and motorists making up their 'turn left' minds at the last moment and forcing unfortunate motorcyclists on the inside to turn with them. Indicators are hardly used here.

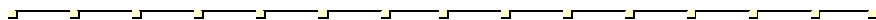
Phil is quite an accomplished traffic handler these days and we ride up between the rows of cars in peak hour traffic with the best of them. On the motorway between here and Georgetown there is one five-lane wide stretch of road where I do feel a bit like a blowfly in a fly-swatter factory though, because we have to drive up the middle lane to get to Batu Maung and avoid being cut off by motorists on our right who remember they need to turn left at the last moment and thus cut across two lanes including ours, at absolutely the last moment. Believe me, it happens! We have taken our TV to get it repaired, carried heaps of groceries and transported various strange loads on the bike. Two cruising yachts that have left LBM recently have wheeled their bikes aboard after the travelift lowered their vessels gently into the water.

Feeling fairly confident on the bike when our visas were due to be renewed in mid-January, we decided to renew them by road rather than sea. There are several options for Malaysian visa renewal from Penang and we settled on a 260km round trip to Betong, Thailand which is the closest border crossing but it's not well known. Most people go to Hat Yai and have to stay for three days to satisfy the local immigration office but we did our round trip the same day. Of course there's Singapore but that's a long way south.

So, for the grand sum of RM6 for fuel, we crossed the Penang Bridge (which is currently having an additional lane added just for motorbikes, only took one wrong turn to get on the E17 motorway, followed the highway to Grik as we'd been told, turned off at Baling, stopped there and had a cup of kopi ais (phonetic with adjective after noun) and a fish cake which was actually a sponge cake cooked in a fish mould a la salmon pâté, and were across the border by lunch time.

We rode the 6ks to Betong, ate lunch, saw the largest mailbox in the world, had a Thai foot massage (first time for Phil) bought bacon and whisky (Thailand does much better smallgoods than Malaysia and whisky's much cheaper) and turned around and came home, crossing the channel between the mainland and Penang on the ferry this time.

After the fairing and painting problem is resolved it will be wonderful to get back in the water. We have missed the season here for Thailand but there is always next year. Later this year we are planning to go to Borneo. Before we do that we are coming back to Australia to visit family and friends and get married. We'll be in Hobart and would love to catch up with everyone, so we have booked Site 9 at Waterworks Reserve on 21 March at 12.00 noon. BYO everything and we look forward to seeing you there.



And Further on Anchors

From Roger Locke - *Andromeda*

My records show that it was 2004 when I last wrote about anchors, and that was an update of earlier ponderings. The basic principles haven't changed since then, but some people have been giving serious thought and a lot of time to anchor design and testing. The result is a series of anchors which may be described as ultra high holding power anchors.

In 2006, West Marine undertook a series of tests on 14 different anchors which were reported by Sail Magazine in the USA, and by Yachting Monthly and Motor Boats Monthly in the UK. Some of you will have seen the reports, and they have been mentioned previously in Albatross.

The tests were conducted in three separate bottom types, but each of them was generally a layer of soft sand to mud over harder sand to clay. Thus deep soft bottoms and very hard bottoms were not tested. Multiple straight pull tests were conducted, but only some of the veering tests were mentioned. One of the veering tests bent an aluminium anchor which otherwise performed extremely well.

The test anchors were not all the same mass, even allowing for the fact that some were aluminium and most steel, and so the magazines did some calculating to make for equivalent performance comparison. In each case the anchor tested was one recommended by the manufacturer for boats in the "35 to 40 foot" class, but anchoring conditions were not specified.

Some of the anchors tested do not sit easily on a bow roller, and so don't interest me except in an emergency role. There are sufficient anchors which sit easily on the bow to not have to deal with one requiring lifting on board or other special handling.

Andromeda has, probably since launching, but certainly in the 10 years we have owned her, had a 49 pound plough type anchor on the roller. This has had a reasonable performance but has been known to drag. I excuse the times when a can or scallop shell fitted over the tip of the plough.

The plough has finally lost all galvanising, and rather than remove the lead, regalanvise, re-lead and return it to service, I decided to pension it off after 20 years.

The new anchor is a 20 kg Rocna, of New Zealand design and manufacture. The Rocna has a broad fluke shaped to dig into the bottom, a sharp tip, and a roll bar to ensure the tip faces the bottom. The manufacturers recommend the 20 kg model for 11 metre yachts up to 12 tonnes. Our estimated 8.5 tonne cruising displacement leaves a bit of leeway which I prefer.

The Rocna included in the West Marine tests was a 32 pound model (15 kg) but it provided the highest holding power of the 14 anchors tested after the ratio corrections mentioned above.

The manufacturer says that the anchor is made from a brake pressing rather than being roll formed, which should provide superior strength. The anchor has two holes near the front to allow buoying for a retrieval line in rocky bottoms, and to allow attachment of a tandem anchor.

Once an anchor is set in a bottom into which it digs, the area of the flukes is the most important consideration against a direct pull out. The newer style of anchor provides quicker setting than older styles, and greater fluke area for an equivalent size.

So far the anchor has only been set once. It dug in well at Rosebanks and came up with a full load of thick mud. But then nobody dragged that night even though the wind was strong. At least two other types of anchors were in use on adjacent boats.

I'll let you know in a few years if the investment is worthwhile.



Going About

Graeme Von Bibra – Vale

From Commodore Leo Foley

Further to the eulogy for Graeme in the last issue of Albatross, I would also like to pay tribute to Graeme's work within the CYCT. During some of the period when he was Commodore, I was the Vice-Commodore, and we worked well together to further the interests of the Club. One particular success that comes to mind was the Regatta organised to celebrate the 200th anniversary of D'Entrecasteaux discovering the Channel. It was held at Snug in 1992, and, thanks to Graeme's advocacy, was supported by the French Government - to the extent that they sent a destroyer, *Commandant Birot*, as the flagship!

It was a marvellous day on the water for boats of all sizes, from dinghies to large yachts and cruisers. The on-shore activities and food stalls were so successful that it was resolved to repeat them - and the 'Taste of Huon' was born. Well done Graeme, and the CYCT.

Just a couple of corrections to last month's article. Graeme's wife, Margaret, advises that Graeme was a member of the Channel Heritage Museum (a different organisation from the Channel Historical Society), and despite his long list of community activities, he was not a member of the Volunteer Fire Brigade. We are happy to correct these mistakes, and congratulate Graeme on his life of service and achievement.

.

Catch up with Helen Stewart and Phil

Helen Stewart, a previous Commodore of CYCT, will be in Hobart shortly with partner (and soon to be husband) Phil visiting friends and family.

She has planned a **barbecue for Saturday 21st March at 12.00 noon at Site 9, Waterworks Reserve**, and all CYCT members will be very welcome.

It's BYO everything, and will be a great opportunity to not only pass on your good wishes to Helen and Phil, but also get some more details about life in Malaysia and how to keep your sanity when your boat is on the slip for months at a time and the problems just keep coming!

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Found – a black sleeveless vest

From Wendy Lees

Wendy Lees has a black sleeveless vest loaned to a Coastal Cruising member at the barbecue at the DSS on 7th February. The vest is probably XL with a K&D badge on it as well as a 'Devils in Danger Foundation' badge.

Contact Wendy on 62297603 or 0428337994.

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Marine Farming Lease – Zuidpool Rock

Notice No.: M28-09
Valid From: 02/19/2009
Valid Until: 03/28/2009

Mariners are advised that Huon Aquaculture Company Pty Ltd will be expanding their boundary of the marine farming lease South of Zuidpool Rock

temporarily to enable adjustments to be made to mooring equipment. (AUS 173)

The new lease boundaries will be defined by coordinates (WGS 84):

Number	Latitude	Longitude
1	43° 20.1754	147° 8.79144'
2	43° 20.4238'	147° 9.02934'
3	43° 20.916'	147° 8.06334'
4	43° 20.669'	147° 7.82946'

The coordinates will be marked with Special Marker with light as per IALA characters with lights at 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Works will commence 23 February 2009 for a period of 4 weeks.

Mariners are advised to transit with care in the area.

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Replacement of Southport Jetty

From MAST

The replacement of the Southport Jetty is now underway. The existing timber jetty is being demolished to make way for the new structure which is being constructed from steel piles, concrete headstocks and concrete deck planks which will give the jetty a much longer life than a conventional timber structure. The works are being undertaken by Tasmanian Marine Construction (TMC), who are demolishing sections of the existing jetty as the new one is being constructed.

A concrete abutment was completed in November and since then TMC have been demolishing one span at a time and replacing it with the new structure. The primary plant being used is a 30 tonne crane which is then driven further out on the newly constructed sections to aid further demolition and construction of the next section. This process will continue for the entire length of the jetty.

Due to the rock encountered when piling at the site, the piles are being spun into the rock. Once this is completed, then plastic sleeves are placed over the pile and sealed at both ends to minimise the rate of rusting of the piles. Concrete headstocks are then placed on top of the piles with the crane and finally, concrete deck planks are also placed into position with the crane.

It is expected that the jetty will be completed around March-April of 2009





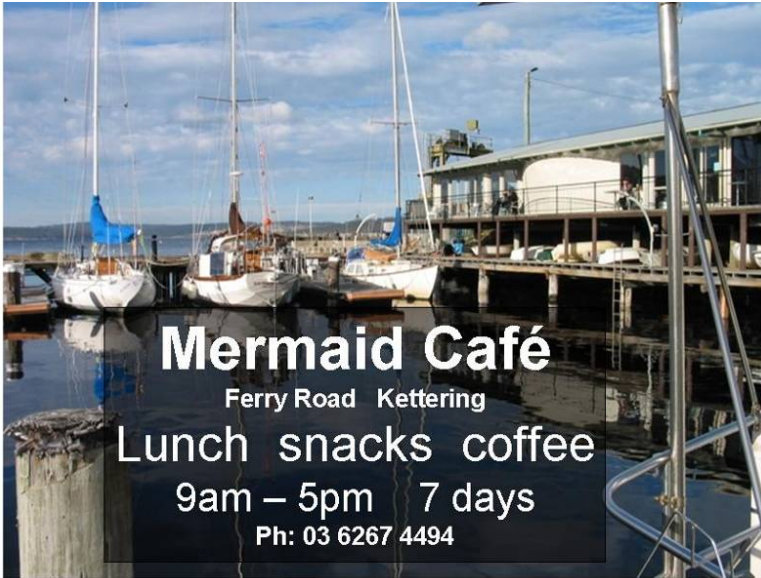
CCCA Barbecue

The barbecue held on 7th February to meet members of the CCCA visiting Hobart for the AWBF was a great success.

Thanks to all who helped with the organisation, and to those members who were able to come and enjoy meeting fellow cruisers from the mainland.

Thanks, too, to the DSS for making their facilities available.





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