

LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB
CRUISING DIVISION

CRUISELETTER



May 2022 No. 386



A warm welcome Isla Breeze

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Skipper's Report

Our March members meeting was well attended, with around 30 members attending. Our guest speaker was Albi Pratt from North Sails. Albi talked about modern cruising sails and the current generation of North products. We have had a focus on technical matters over the last few months, so our June and July guest speakers will be directed towards cruising locations.

The weather for our Easter Cruise was near perfect for relaxing on the Lake. Light winds, clear sky, about 25-degree days. The fleet of about a dozen boats congregated at Browns Bay on Friday and Saturday. Most opted for a sail on Sunday, with the fleet scattering and heading home or to favourite anchorages. Point Wollonstcroft, Duck Hole and Wangi seemed popular.

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Skipper's Report cont'd

Graham and Linda were able to attend in their new boat, and it was lovely to see *Isla Breeze* at her maiden CD activity.

Gordon Butler
Skipper

Upcoming activities

Our normal schedule is:

Members' meetings – Second Monday of the month, 7:00 pm at the Club.

On water activities – The weekend following the members' meeting.

9th May Annual General Meeting

Annual General meeting.

There will be no elections *The lovely* for the Committee, as the

Committee is a 2-year term. We will however, provide annual reports, and confirm key positions such as supper coordinator, safety office and representatives on external bodies.

13-21st May – On Lake Activity

- Extended lake cruise – attempt #2
 - Details to be advised closer to the date
- Coordinator – TBA

13th June – General Meeting

Guest Speaker, John and Raewyn Lemberg - Coral Sea trip – 2021

17-19th June – Soup Day

Details to be advised closer to the date.

11th July - Ralph Asquith

Cruising Port Stephens / Broughton Island / Myall Lakes

16th July Activity

Visit to Marine Rescue Base TBC

Morning visit, then lunch at the Swansea RSL

Other News

Our membership fees for 2023 are now overdue. Ralph has been emailing reminders to those who have not renewed membership. Thanks to all those who have renewed for another year.

A number of members have decided not to renew their membership and we thank them for their participation during their time in the Cruising Division. Hopefully we will be able catch up on the Lake at some point.



Cruising

Easter Weekend Cruise by David

It was so good to get back out on the water and drop the hook with fellow Cruising Division members in Browns Bay.

Kombali was able to get underway on the morning of Good Friday and, with a gentle breeze, up went the gennaker for a leisurely cruise south from Croudace Bay. Eventually the wind backed and strengthened, providing a nice little reach down the lake under genoa and main, and the opportunity to sail into Browns Bay to drop the hook near Double Fun.

And fun is what we had over the next two days. Some enjoyable socializing and kayaking, and walks ashore, occupied much of the next two days before the fleet dispersed toward home ports or Duck Hole on Sunday.



Kombali 2 slipping into Browns Bay under the watchful Drone of John Lemberg

Some serious discussions took place as we did our best to settle the world's problems.

Of course, there were those who knew better than to even try - so they went kayaking.





If you haven't seen good weather for a while, this is what it looked like in Brown's Bay.



John and Raewyn's learnings on cruising comfortably

"The Bach" has returned. Two plus years of cruising north we are back to check out the house, catch up with good friends and get more use from the winter wardrobe. Why not share a few of the lessons learned along the way and encourage sharing of similar learnings between our CD colleagues.....

Bunnings is the new chandlery.

Planning to make land fall at a marina along the coast requires careful attention to planning to optimise the time paying big dollars for the privilege of lying alongside a finger in a marina. What are the transport options? Where are the supermarkets? When is the local farmers' market? Where is Dan Murphy's? Featuring in the planning these days more often than chandlery is; where is the nearest Bunnings?

A mega supplier of marine goods disguised as home improvement products and therefore devoid of the 'marine' premium, Bunnings is a must visit on any excursion ashore.

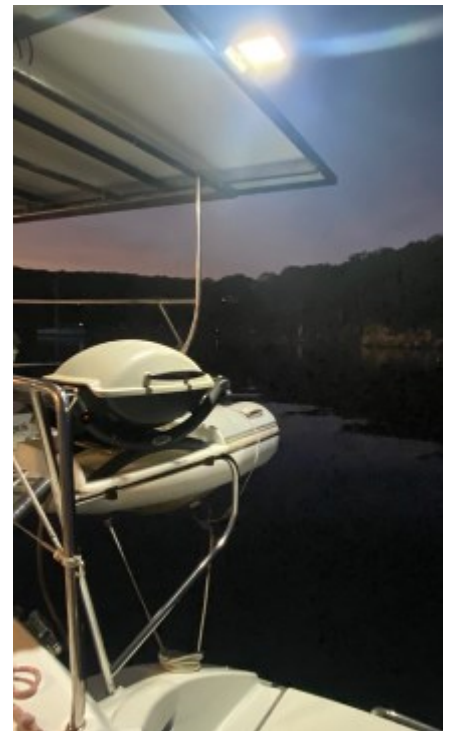
So, what has "the bach" renovated with from Bunnings.....

Smart home lighting comes aboard. My absolute favourite automation item aboard is our \$25 sensor solar wall light mounted above the transom steps and BBQ. Independently solar

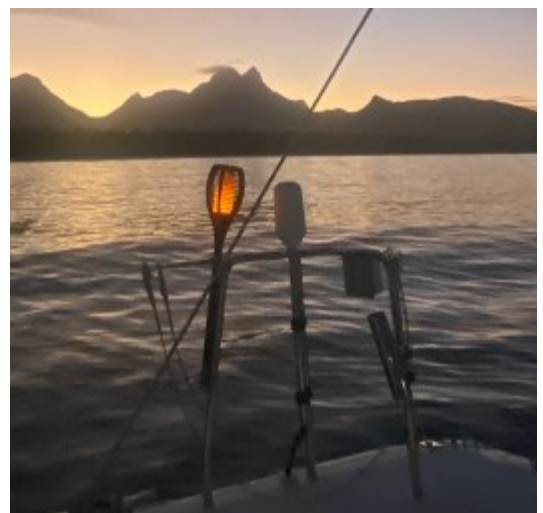


powered, switches itself on at dusk and equipped with a sensor that increases the illumination as you approach in the tender at night. It is amazing. So much so that I have a spare aboard, should the in-service light decide to illuminate no longer. We have yet to have one wear out from age. However friends were staying aboard and became somewhat annoyed with the brilliance from our \$25 light illuminating their cabin through the hatch that they ventured out to the transom in the middle of the night to find the off button

for the dark destroying mega star. A push of the power button was enough to displace the light from its bracket and send it into the drink. Our friends were able to confirm in the morning that our little wonder light continued to illuminate as it slowly sunk into the depths of the anchorage! Replacements now have a squirt of silicone between the light body and the mounting bracket!



Of course we always get back to "the bach" before the sunset. Yeah, right!! Not so complex when there are only a handful of masthead anchor lights in the anchorage. Try finding your boat without embarrassment when there are over fifty! Not unusual in large and popular anchorages. There is a sense of reassurance and comfort when we step into the tender on the beach and spy our unique \$5.50 flaming orange garden lights through the mass of white LED anchor lights. They automatically flick on at dusk on the transom rails providing a comforting signal that the bach is still there awaiting our arrival home.....after the roadie!



Our absolute favourite activity while cruising QLD is exploring the GBR. Enjoying snorkelling remote reef or just chilling out on our very own cay miles away from civilization is what makes all the boat maintenance worthwhile. The Bunnings sun umbrella (\$19) protects, while we enjoy. On the reef you can spend a lot of time under the sun in the tender. Fishing or just having a spell between snorkeling, usually in calm sunny conditions. An electrical conduit saddle (\$0.78) attached to the tender seat provides a perfect support for our sun umbrella while it casts a cooling shadow over the crew in the tender. For on beach chilling, we do need to recommend an item outside the current Bunnings stock listing – the umbrella sand anchor available on ebay for \$16. No doubt soon to be available at Bunnings.

So, what gems have other members discovered in Bunnings, or elsewhere, devoid of the marine premium price tag that make life afloat more comfortable? Please contribute to the thread in the CD Facebook Group.

John and Raewyn

The Bach

Next month.....lessons learned cooking afloat.



Safety Corner April 2022 - Chris Cahill

Fire Extinguishers for Cruising Boats

There are 5 basic types of Fire Extinguishers available as portable devices in Australia:

Water
Wet Chemical
Foam
CO₂
Dry Powder

Only Dry Powder extinguishers are really suitable for small vessels and effective against most classes of fire.

Classes of Fire

A - Normal combustible material - Wood, paper, fabric etc
B - Flammable liquids - Petrol, paints etc
C - Flammable vapours and gases - LPG etc
D - Flammable metals - Potassium, Lithium, Magnesium etc
E - Electrical equipment including energised equipment.
F - Cooking fats and oils, animal fats.

Dry powder is effective against classes A, B and E.
A Fire blanket is essential to tackle class F fires.

Regulations

Australian Standards AS 2444 - Section 5-Vehicles and Small Vessels

Essentially says should be suitable for the classes of fire that could occur including the nature of any cargo.

NSW - Transport for NSW - Boating Safety Equipment just states 1 Extinguisher

Australian Sailing Special Regulations Cat 7 min 1x 1A.10B(E) dry powder extinguisher and a Fire Blanket

ID SIGN	TYPICAL APPEARANCE	EXTINGUISHER TYPE (Cylinder Contains)	CLASS A Wood, Paper Textiles etc. (Normal Combustibles)	CLASS B Flammable Liquids Petrol, Paints	CLASS E Electrical Fires	CLASS F Cooking Oil, Animal Fats, Vegetable Oil
		DRY POWDER CHEMICAL	YES	YES	YES	NO
		Co2 CARBON DIOXIDE	NO	YES	YES	NO
		WATER	YES	NO	NO	NO
		FOAM	YES	YES	NO	NO
		WET CHEMICAL	YES	NO	NO	YES



Interesting Facts

A 1 Kg extinguisher lasts about 10 seconds. A 2 Kg about 15 seconds. May not put the fire out but should aid escape.

1A:10B:E. 2A:20B:E etc - What do the numbers mean? They indicate size or capacity, more precisely -1A = The equivalent of 1 1/4 gallons of water on a class A fire in testing, 10 B = Area of coverage in still air in sq feet under test conditions.

A 1Kg extinguisher will only be effective against a small fire, but will aid escape from a larger one.

Do not use on Aluminium - MAP (mono Ammonium Phosphate - the active ingredient) is highly corrosive to aluminium. Do not use near other chemicals such as pool chemical as MAP is acidic and violent reactions can occur with alkalis.

Be aware that if an engine is running and ingests MAP through the air intake it will most likely irreparably damage the engine .

MAP is a good fertiliser so it isn't bad to practice in your garden with expired ABE extinguishers. But beware pets and neighbours and high winds.

Prevention of fire preferable as Dry Power extinguishers make a hell of a mess and completely destroy mechanical and electrical equipment.

Final Thoughts

One 1Kg is not really enough - we carry 2x 1Kg and 1x1.5Kg with a hose.

1 Extinguisher in each accommodation area near to exits, 2 near the engine compartment

At least annual (6 monthly better) maintenance and checks. Shake, check pressure.

Replace at 5 years (too expensive to have them refilled and pressure tested)

Safety Corner

The following safety tip was provided by Dave Santleben.

So the intrepid cruising sailor was making final preparations for an epic cruise abroad... he asked his mate, an experienced offshore sailor, to check things over... to make sure he had forgotten NOTHING!!

Weeeeell, his mate said, you have forgotten the gin and the vermouth...

So, the cruiser said: so why is THAT important??

It's this way, said his mate: suppose all your sails are destroyed in a storm, suppose, despite all your spare parts, your engine won't start, suppose your solar and wind generators and 4-stroke generator won't work and you have no water maker, radio or satellite phone, suppose your EPIRB won't work and you have no more food or water left and you are miles from any flight paths or shipping routes....

That would be BAD, said the cruiser, but how would the gin and vermouth help?

Mate: NO PROBLEM! You get a tumbler... pour in two fingers of gin... then one finger of vermouth... then, most importantly, stir it, don't shake it up...then go to drink it...

From all corners of the horizon boats will pop up with people shouting: THAT'S NOT THE WAY TO MAKE A MARTINI !!!



The editor thinks that this will only work in American waters.

Hoisting the BEER FLAG will most likely bring help in Australian waters!

Reefing 101 for the Cruiser - Tony Austin (*Double Fun*) continued from last edition.

Mainsail Slab/Jiffy Reefing

Constantly monitor weather conditions for imminent deterioration e.g. increasing wind strength and seas, squalls, or fronts.

Constantly monitor the motion of the vessel and the state of the crew. Are they both happy?

Never forget the wise, old saying: '*The time to reef is the first time that you think of it*'. Done early reefing is quick, easy and safe - done late it can be none of these!

The decision to reef can be complex and depends upon a mixture of the following:

Wind strength & steadiness

Monohulls usually reef to average wind strength

Catamarans usually reef to the gust strength

Sea state (wind waves and swell)

Boat speed

Tendency to broach or round up

Ability of the autopilot (or helmsman) to safely steer the vessel

Indicative numbers from boat manufacturer, sailmaker and experience

Confidence of the skipper and crew

Have a reefing plan that you have practiced – ideally many times in a wide range of conditions. If the thought of throwing in a quick reef frightens you or your crew then you have not done enough practice, or your system is not well set up. Remember reefing can also be useful when motor sailing in light, sloppy conditions.

Make sure all reefing lines are rigged and in good working order. Identify and remove any points of excessive friction e.g. add turning blocks or low friction rings to mainsail reefing points. All halyards and lines should be clearly marked so that they can be identified in all conditions.

Assess the situation and decide:

How many reefs do I need (or should I drop the mainsail completely)?

What will be my best point of sail to do the reef?

Should I keep the headsail out and drawing?

Do I need an engine running 'just in case' something goes wrong?

Brief your crew on your plan and confirm their role(s).

Put in the reef:

Tighten the topping lift (if needed) – aim to reduce the load on the mainsail leach.

Ease the boom vang (and lines to your boom brake if fitted)

Bring vessel onto preferred course and either hand steer or use autohelm on 'Wind Direction' setting if available. A close reach is often best but downwind can be much smoother.

Ease mainsheet to the point that the mainsail just luffs (N.B. It won't actually luff if running down wind)

Ease mainsail halyard to chosen reefing mark

Use either tack reefing line, downhaul or hand to drag mainsail down mast track

Attach luff reefing cringle to gooseneck horn (or tension tack reefing line)

Tension mainsail halyard tight to flatten sail

Tension reefing line to draw leech reefing cringle close to boom and tighten the foot

Ease topping lift (if needed)

Reset boom vang (and boom brake if fitted)

Adjust mainsheet to desired point of sail

Tidy up bottom of sail either with sail ties or bunching into boom bag.

Check the balance of the vessel and reef headsail as needed to balance the boat.

Continue to monitor conditions for need for further reefs. Removing a reef is done by reversing the above order of actions.

Consider the following:

1. Make sure all ropes are free and lubricate cars/slugs before hoisting main.

Make sure all reefing lines are secured to the boom.

Tidy up rope tailings after reefing and ensure that they are free to run when it is time to take the reef out.

Mark the uphaul (mainsail halyard) with whipping at the reefing points so you don't excessively let the main down.

2. Reefing generally is: First reef – 10% - 15% sail reduction
Second reef – 35%
Third reef – 60%

Consider going to the Second reef first up – especially if you must leave the cockpit and go to the mast, you will find that your speed will not drop off that much and you won't have a second hazardous trip out of the cockpit.

3. If you are motor/sailing and the sail is flip flopping due to wave action then reef to stop wear and tear on the sail and gear. Generally, this requires going to the Second reef.
4. Have someone in a position to see the ropes and sail to avoid tangles or catch points (battens, spreaders, sail cars/slugs, sail leach being pinched/pulled, ropes caught up) that will apply excessive loads on the gear as you reef.
5. Lake v Ocean reefing – At sea the wave action makes it harder to reef upwind, you are thrown around more on deck and in the cockpit. On the lake it is usually relatively flat water, but it can be short and choppy so care is still required.

REMEMBER: *"Gentlemen sailors always sail down wind"*

When reefing downwind you can come up to the wind to clear the main from the spreaders (pull the boom in if required), tighten the genoa in to put more backwind on to the main to help keep the main off the spreaders. This may require the auto pilot to adjust to the changes so don't rush to reefing.

After reefing you may need to rebalance the sails to keep the auto pilot from excessive work.

6. If you are required to go forward to attach the luff to reefing horns consider using a strop with snap shackle to attach the sail (it can't come off), this is easier than trying to pull the sail down and over the horn. There is no need to have the sail flat to the boom - the outhaul reef line can be used to set an even distance from the boom to set the foot tension.
7. When sailing downwind you will find the genoa loses the wind at about 140degrees apparent and you will generally roll it partly in to stop the flog/flop unless you want to sail faster on the beam but then at some time you will have to gybe or do a bouncy granny turn.

Safe sailing,
Tony

Post Sail Inspections by skippertips.com

Imagine coming back to the dock after a perfect day of sailing. You dock the boat, set the lines, clean her up and go ashore with your sailing partner. Three days later, the phone rings. It's your marina. Your boat is half filled with water. There's a leak somewhere...

Five of the prime "boat sinkers" often wait to reveal weaknesses until after you come back from sailing or motoring (more on this later). Sure, you may have done a super thorough pre-sail inspection. But, Boat U.S. Insurance stated that in 2014, 69% of all boats sank while docked or moored!

Sure, you're tired, ready for a beer or dinner ashore, or have a pressing schedule. But, first things first. After you tie up to the pier or slip, grab that mooring buoy, or set the hook for a night at anchor, conduct a simple post-sail inspection. Why do a "post sail"?

You've been underway and your hull has flexed, vibrated, and weights have worked against screws, bolts, washers, and other fittings. Something could have loosened up. At the Chapman School of Seamanship, we required all students to do a post sail inspection after being underway. Sure enough, that's when most leaks were found.

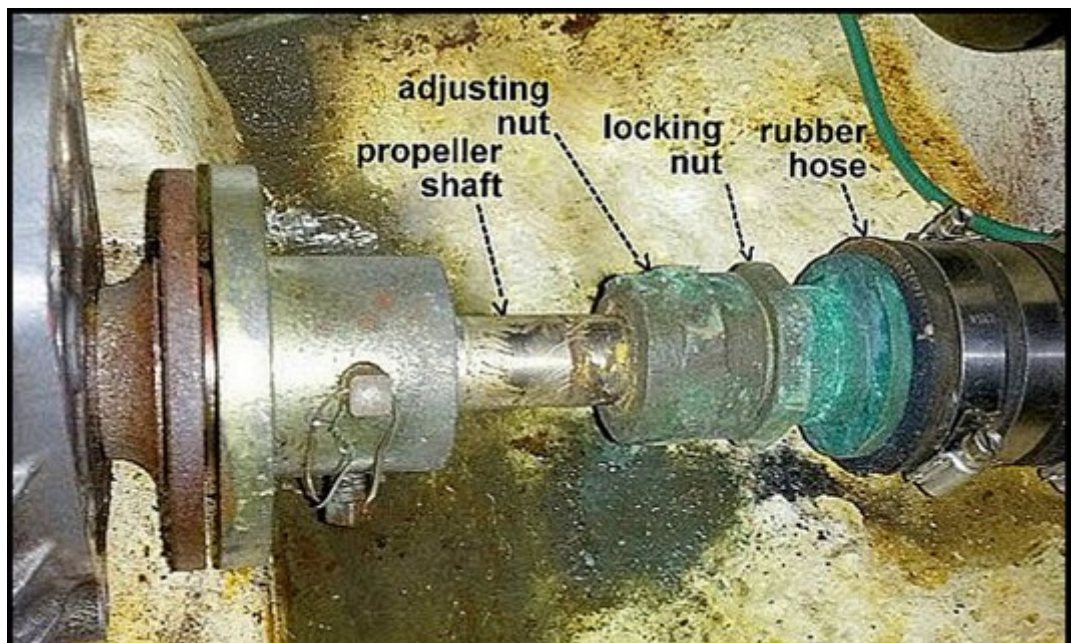
Do the Diligence Before Leaving Your Boat

One day, a young student was assigned to be the skipper of one of the sailboats, a 28-foot Hunter. He coordinated his crew, went through pre-sail, found no discrepancies and got her underway. Later that day, he brought her back in to the marina, tied her up and got the crew to clean up the boat, do a fresh-water washdown and locked her up.

After he was done, he came up to me and said, "All, done, Captain John. Anything else?". I looked at him with a grin and said, "Well, not quite done. Have you flipped that pre-sail checklist over to see what's on the back?"

Red faced, the young man flipped over the inspection sheet and saw the blank check-sheet headed "POST-SAIL INSPECTIONS" across the top. "Oops. Forgot."

So, he told his crew to come back aboard to finish up. And, it took just five minutes. Five short minutes which more than likely saved that boat. First thing to check was the stuffing box. Now, the stuffing box looks like a rubber and metal sleeve which covers the shaft exit, or hole in the back of your boat. The stuffing box plugs the hole to keep the water out.



He opened up the companionway ladder which covered the engine, set it aside, got down on his knees and checked the stuffing box. Sure enough, a small, steady stream was spewing out of the stuffing box nuts.

Naturally, he made a note on his check sheet of the discrepancy. The yard hauled the boat that day. They found that the packing material inside the stuffing box had worn away! Now this was Friday, and the school would soon close for the weekend.

You can imagine what may have happened if that leak had continued until Monday morning, after spewing a small stream of water for more than 60 hours. Lesson learned? Five minutes for a post-sail inspection will be time well spent.

Post-sail inspections are not as extensive as the pre-sail inspection. But, they do hit what I call "The Five Vitals". In the case of thru-hulls you can count them on one hand:

- Stuffing box (check for leaks; dripless seals, too).
- Engine Raw Water Intake (close it).
- Sink Drain (close it).
- Head (intake and discharge -close both).
- Bilges (leaks around transducer? Excess water in the bilge?).

As you can see, there's nothing hard about this. Each and every time after you come back from sailing, do the diligence and make a post-sail inspection. It'll be time well spent.