



LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB  
CRUISING DIVISION

# CRUISELETTER



September 2022 No. 390



A foggy morning on the Clarence River (May 2019)

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## Skipper's Report

Our August Members Meeting was attended by around 26 members, which was good to see. Our planned guest speakers were called away on family matters, so Trudi and I talked about our experiences in 2019 when we cruised the Clarence River with the SIYC. The Clarence is a wonderful cruising area, and we really enjoyed the social aspects of cruising this destination with around 25 other boats.

Our August activity was a one-night lake cruise, with an information session on magnetism and boats on the Saturday morning. Trudi and I were unable to attend, but from the Facebook posts it looks like those who braved the winter weather were rewarded with good company, and fine weather.

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# Skipper's Report cont'd

## Safety Share

At our August General Meeting we tried a new format for the safety share. Members were asked to share recent experiences where they had learnt something new that would improve safety, or if they had a question for the other members. I felt that the concept was a success, and we will be running the safety share format again at some stage.

Ideas raised during the meeting included;

- The safety benefits of life jackets are greatly improved by crutch straps. The crutch strap stops the jacket from riding up and interfering with breathing.
- The activator on auto-inflate life jackets have a use by date, and require servicing.
- EPIRB's should be stored in a location that can be accessed in the event of capsiz. Use of PLB's should be practiced.
- Some new mobile phones are rated as waterproof – may be useful.
- Small jump starters are available that can start diesel engines in the event of a flat battery.
- It is not smart to go to the shrouds to take a pee at sea.
- Metho stoves are an alternative to other more flammable fluids.
- Survival at Sea courses are worthwhile!

## 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.

### 12<sup>th</sup> September – General meeting

**Guest speaker** Chris Cahill, life rafts including a dry demonstration of an out-of-date raft.

### 16-18<sup>th</sup> September – On lake activity

- Weekend cruise on the lake.

Details to be confirmed on Facebook, but gathering on Friday evening and then a sail in company on the Saturday.

### 10<sup>th</sup> October – General meeting

**Guest speaker** Malcolm Goodfellow, who works as a pilot in Newcastle harbour. Malcolm will talk about large ships and cruising boats.

### 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October activity Ivan Irwin Cruise

- Week long cruise on the lake, our first extended cruise since the last one!
- Details tba closer to the date.

Feel free to drop in / out if you cannot make the full week.

### 14<sup>th</sup> November – General meeting

**Guest speakers** Mark and Carolanne Clement, Cruising Sydney and Middle Harbour.

# Cruising

## 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

### Tender accessories

The cruising tender gets a flogging. It is often referred to as the 'car' of the yacht, but there is no way you would expose your car to the harsh environment and treatment that a cruising tender has to endure. Whether the best value tender is a RIB, a tinnie or a flash carbon fibre model is an often-debated topic that I don't intend to cover here. We have a 2.75m Barefoot RIB powered by a 2 stroke Tohatsu 9.8Hp outboard. This set up is well sized for The Bach and works. We would love to have a bigger tender, but with that would come more weight in the davits and the chance of a few more chips in the gelcoat as we raise and lower it between the hulls.

For such an important, but compact, component of cruising equipment to safely deliver valuable service over time – it needs to be well set up. The following are few of the accessories that we have added.

Our tender does not have any manufacturer installed storage. Our 'rocket launcher' PVC tube storage bolted under the seat is all we have. The four tubes contain;

- Tool kit including spare spark plugs vacuum packed, line to be used as an alternative pull start cord and a spare safety cut out ignition switch (for when I lose one ashore)

- A small water proof case for boat cards and \$20 cash (for impromptu sundowners ashore at the pub)

- A compression bandage (for snake bites), a small bottle of vinegar (for stingers)

- Emergency nav lights and a torch

- A light jacket and a small micro-fibre towel (for wiping the seat dry for the crew J)

- A 5m length of 8mm line.

- Sunscreen and insect repellent.

That's a reasonable amount of kit stashed away and kept dry in the four tubes. After usually opening at least two other tubes before opening the one I should have – the labelling became an important addition!



You might notice in the previous pic a plastic saddle attached to the middle of the aft edge of the seat. This is through which we pass the pole of the \$40 Bunnings beach umbrella, mentioned in an earlier Cruising Comfortably article. Very welcome shade on those sunny glassy days out on the reef.

For security at a jetty or beach we have a padlock and a 6m length of plastic-coated stainless wire attached to the transom and looped through the fuel tank. It probably wouldn't stop a determined thief, but I think it is appropriately sized to deter the casual thief.

Our tender is PVC as opposed to harder wearing and more expensive Hypalon. The tender has had eight years of continuous and hard use and, apart from a couple of leaks caused by fishhooks (whoops), we have had no failures. We are on to our second set of protective chaps which I would consider to be very worthwhile life extenders.

We have a Railblaza Starport fixed to the transom that accommodates a light pole or a fishing rod holder.



Diving and snorkelling from such a small platform requires considerable organisation and care. Two divers and SCUBA gear is really the limit. If there is any chop on the water it's a case of powering through rather than over the water. Appropriately, we're in wet suits!

With two snorkellers things are far less cramped, but careful organisation is still required to minimise the risk of knocking items overboard that don't float! We take a waterproof hard case with us to store VHF handheld, sunglasses and any other small personal items that we don't want to get wet or trodden on in the bottom of the tender. We have fold down wheels on the transom to enable the tender to be hauled up a beach in most circumstances. I would prefer the pneumatic Beachmaster style rather than the hard plastic ones that we have. There is a huge variety of customs set ups of course. Generally pneumatic tyres are superior and the largest diameter you can accommodate without them interfering with other boat parts and or functions the better.

Interestingly, once you get north of the Townsville area the beach grade and material changes to steeper and more coarse. I haven't seen any form of transom wheel setup that works well in these conditions. In these conditions we bring a second small anchor aboard and run a continuous line from the transom of the tender through the eye of a shore anchor, back out to a small block on the end of the chain attached to the first anchor (that was dropped in deep water as we reversed into the beach) and up to the bow of the tender. This allows us to jump out of the tender onto the beach and then the tender is pulled away from the gnarly shoreline.

Spare parts carried on The Bach for our tender are a puncture repair kit and a spare propellor. Fuel is managed by storing a 25L container in a ventilated locker fwd, and 2 x 5L containers in a ventilated locker aft. The tank in the tender has a 10L capacity. As soon as its contents are seen to be half full, oil is mixed into one of the 5L containers and it is emptied into the tank in the tender. The 5L containers are refilled from the 25L one. So, we always have at least half a tank of fuel in the tender and it is easy and accurate to dispense a top up when required.

Before we depart cruising again, we plan to add a water separator in the fuel line to the outboard. Water in fuel is the only reliability issue we have had with the Tohatsu. Not too difficult to see how it can happen when the little boat is full of dive gear and crew and punching back home into a big chop. We're technically operating under water! I would also like to add a small sounder with GPS for fishing and checking out shallow anchorages.

I would be very interested to learn what others have done to improve your tender systems. Please contribute to the post on Facebook.



The short length of 50mm PVC tube that we use as a tiller/throttle extension doubles as a short flag pole for the dive flag when tilted up.



An example of home made dinghy chaps. Sailrite also have a helpful DIY video available at

<https://www.sailrite.com/How-to-Make-Dinghy-Chaps-Video>



Never before has one publication combined all the pertinent information together, presented in a hard cover 'coffee table' style A4 sized book in full colour. It is also available in a digital format.

- **Introduction** – a complete account of practical information needed for users of Lake Macquarie, including important safety advice.
- **What to do in Lake Macquarie** – highlighting many features and attractions around the Lake Macquarie region, with insight on twenty specific locations and their history, how to get there, hazards when approaching, points of interest when arriving, mooring information, wind protection, what to do when you reach your destination as well as highlighting local food, entertainment and accommodation options.
- **Information for mariners** – what you need to know about boat ramps, jetties, potable water, food sources, etc.
- **Hazards** – all waterways carry risks and the book highlights those to be mindful of, how to avoid them and what to do if help is needed.
- **Weather** – annual statistics and how to retrieve useful weather forecasts for your planned visit.

***All proceeds raised from the sale of this book will help fund Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie operations.***

To order, click on this link: <https://lakemacquariebook.com.au/payment-form/>