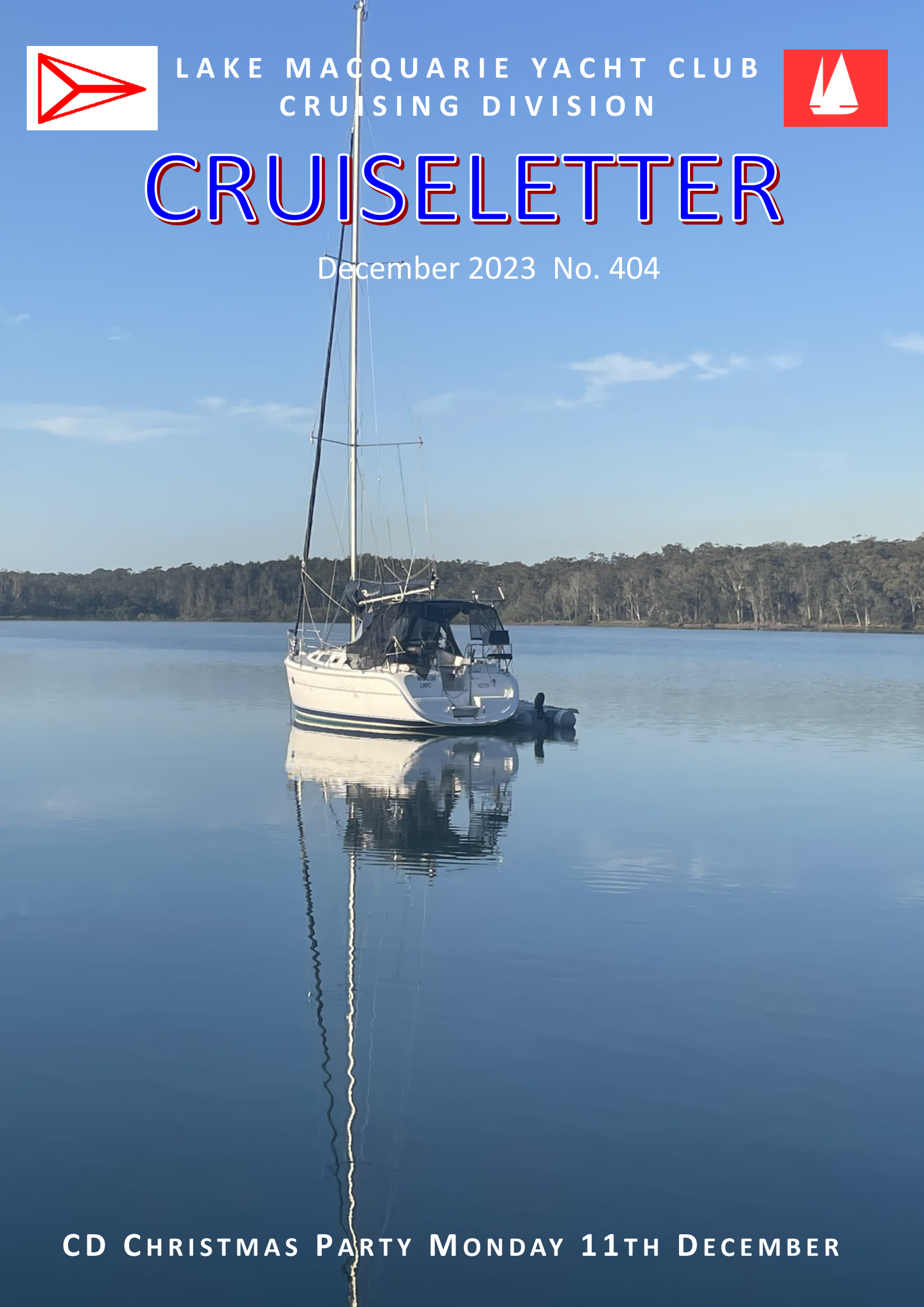


LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB
CRUISING DIVISION



CRUISELETTER

December 2023 No. 404



CD CHRISTMAS PARTY MONDAY 11TH DECEMBER

Contents

Skipper's Report	3-4
Guest Speaker	5
Report on Previous Outing	6
How Safe Are We? Safety Report	7
2023 - The Year that Was!	8-9
5 Minutes in the Spotlight	10-13
Calendar of Events	14



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Committee

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Cover - *Migaloo enjoying the tranquility of Crangan Bay.*



Skipper's Report

Ralph Asquith



Our early summer weather has been tempered by rain (very welcomed by farmers and fire fighters) and storms.

Guest speaker for November was Sarah Joyce from Mariner Boating Holidays who tempted us with photos and testimony of sailing holidays in the Mediterranean and other exotic locations. Trevor Joyce also advised us that he will be holding a mini boat show of their Bali catamaran (part of a syndicate based at Marmong) at LMYC on the 18/1/24 .

Unfortunately, our first on water event (Cruise to Newcastle Yacht Club scheduled for 17-19 November) had to be cancelled due to ongoing delays in the channel dredging. This was disappointing as the weather was great and the RAAF held their spectacular air show in Newcastle on Saturday 18/11/23.

We met for a 'back-up' on-water event at Bonnells Bay on Friday 24th. The crews enjoyed sundowners on the foreshore near the Bonnells Bay jetty, not deterred by a bit of light rain, on Friday evening. A tender cruise up Dora Creek had been planned for Saturday morning but ongoing rain kyboshed that plan. We enjoyed a delicious morning tea onboard SV 2Dream watching the weather and viewing forecasts/weather radar before deciding to abandon the event due to the rain and no wind.

Upcoming Events

We have decided to try an alternative for our Christmas Party to increase social interaction and contain the cost to \$35 per head (same as last year). The event will be held in the Bayview section of the club rather than the Marquee (hopefully a little quieter), and food will consist of a Grazing Board followed by several Chef's Platters and finally by our regular Christmas cake and custard desert. I hope this whets everyone's appetite!

Wear your Christmas shirt and gear (prize for the best dressed!).



The Cruising Division sun hats will be available at the Christmas Party and we also have a few calendars left for sale.

The Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club has scheduled a visit to Lake Macquarie in December and we have organised to meet up with them for the following events.

- 30/12/23 15:00 meet at Styles Point for Sundowners at 18:00
- 31/12/23 10:00 Sail around Pulbah and then back to Wangi
- New years eve fireworks at Wangi Wangi.
- Breakfast 9:30 (Bacon and Egg rolls/Coffee) at Wangi foreshore (near Workers Club)

We are planning an Australia Day event which will be hosted by Richard and Jen Masson. Details will be sent mid-January.

Lakefest events have also been scheduled for Jan-Mar 2024. Please refer to the schedule at <http://www.lakefest.com.au/>

Pittwater "Freedom Cruise" is on 25th Feb - 9th Mar 2024 so mark the date in your calendar. Please complete Coastal Passage Audits and consider getting a Covid vaccination booster.

Other News Channel

Dredging of the channel has been a stop-start affair due mainly to mechanical problems that have occurred on the main dredge. The MIDO project manager still expects a channel through the dog-leg of 2.5m depth, 30m wide to be completed before Christmas. We have conducted informal surveys of the rest of the channel and at this stage it appears that it is navigable for vessels drawing less than 2.5 m.

Continue the pressure for a long term solution (permanent dredge and pipeline to Blacksmiths Beach). Please contact the minister for transport using the following link <https://www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/ministers/minister-for-transport>. Emphasise the need to permanently keep the channel navigable. Copy to your local member and me so that I have a record. We are receiving encouraging news that a long term plan is being implemented.

Safety Audits

Safety is one of the key objectives of the LMYC CD and therefore, we are asking all members to participate in the audit process to help identify any safety related issues on our yachts. Our auditors are experienced yachtsman who provide this valuable service free of charge to the members, and I thank them for their service, and encourage all members to participate.

The audit process is being reviewed, with the objective of alleviating any disputes by putting the responsibility for safety in the hands of the owner/skipper of the vessel whilst fulfilling the divisions/clubs safety and education objectives.

Cheers and safe sailing.

Ralph



CD Christmas Party

11th December

5.30pm the Bayview Area @ LMYC

Come dressed for the occasion!
Loud Christmas shirts will
definitely make an appearance!

November Guest Speaker — Sarah Joyce - Mariner Boating.

At the November General Meeting the guest speaker was Sarah Joyce, General Manager of Mariner Boating.

This Melbourne based company specialises in small bareboat or chartered cruising holidays where they organise all aspects of your cruising holiday.



As their website states:

For the uninitiated, the world of sailing can feel somewhat daunting. With different vessels and their respective configurations, as well as various destinations to choose from, it's sometimes hard to know where to begin.

You can book a cabin or an entire yacht, take a crew or sail solo. Adventure with us or explore on your own. Our role at Mariner Boating is to demystify the decision-making process for you, tailoring our products to your individual needs and assigning the highest possible value to your holiday experience.

Sarah shared photos from some of their oft-visited cruising destinations including Thailand, Croatia, Mallorca, Spain, Italy and Greece. For those wishing to cruise international waters her presentation was informative and enticing!

Our thanks to Sarah for a very interesting presentation.



2024 Pittwater Cruise

25th February - 9th March

Get ready to FLY!

Maybe a good time to brush up those off-shore navigation skills!



November Outing

Bonnells Bay Excursion - 24th—25th November

With the normal weekend outing postponed due to the RAAF Air Show in Newcastle (and our inability to depart the Lake due to the Channel still being too shallow) it was decided to go to Plan B and explore a seldom visited corner of our Lake.

Those who live in the more southern regions of Lake Macquarie have often suggested Bonnells Bay as a destination, so, despite the weather not looking at its kindest, we headed out on Friday afternoon and enjoyed a gentle easterly all the way to Pulbah before turning west and running with the breeze to the southern shore of the Bay. Five boats dropped anchor just east of Hungry Point in Bonnells Bay and at 1700 gathered on-shore for a happy hour.



It was good to catch up with the crews from *Migaloo*, *Windsong*, *Isla Breeze*, *2Dream* and *Stoked* as well as local residents and CD members Joe and Jeanette owners of *Kimberley Dreaming* who braved the threatening rainclouds and wandered along the shore to join in. As the promised rain set in around 1830 so it was back to boats for a pleasant evening on board.

Saturday unfortunately dawned as wet as the night before so whilst Ralph and Angela rose early enough to get a walk in, as the morning progressed and the drizzle continued it was decided to postpone the planned dinghy run up Dora Creek and share morning tea on board *2Dream* instead.



While we can't control the weather we can still get out on our boats and enjoy the lake and gather with friends. Bonnells Bay is certainly a beautiful place to visit and deserves more investigation.

Thanks to those members who made the effort to get out on their boats and hoist the sails!

Graeme and Fred donned the wet weather gear proving fun can still be had even when a bit damp — especially when helped by a good red!



Just how Safe is Cruising under Sail?

Tony Austin



We are rapidly becoming a society that seems to be totally unaccepting of any risk - be it at work or at play. The 24hr news cycle floods us with stories of things that go wrong and the harm that is done to people and property. Rarely do we get a balanced picture that tells us about the vast majority of times when nothing bad happens and everyone just has a great time. Nowhere is this more true than with cruising under sail. We have all had friends and family question our sanity as we head out in our boats and often they genuinely fear for our safety. So who is right - us the sailors or them the landlubbers? A recently released report from the US Coast Guard (USCG 2022 Recreational Boating Statistical Report (<https://www.uscgboating.org/library/accident-statistics/Recreational-Boating-Statistics-2022.pdf>)) makes for very interesting reading! Sailing/Cruising in boats like ours is an impressively safe activity! And this is in the US where the number of boats is enormous, even by Australian standards, and every waterway is crowded with all types of vessels from privately owned mega yachts through to all types of self powered 'vessels'.

This report has generated much traffic on a popular website (Cruisers Forum - www.cruisersforum.com). The statistics show that, looking at the totality of the accidents/incidents, the most common ones for Auxiliary Sailing Vessels were: Collision with a recreational vessel, Collision with a fixed object, and groundings. The main causes for these events are: Alcohol, Unknown, Hazardous Waters, Operator Inexperience and Operator Inattention.

While the report makes for interesting reading, it is rather hard to find the relevance to our conditions here in Australia so I find the comments from the Forum readers to be quite enlightening. In particular the comments from those members who have served with either onwater enforcement agencies or rescue services to be particularly useful.

Here are a few quotes:

'Sailors were (almost) always highly prepared and operating in a safe manner, while recreational boaters left memories that would stick with you like a High School Drivers Education film'.

'In my experience the most dangerous part of sailing involved getting on to, and off, the boat'.

As cruisers here in NSW we have a fantastic safety record BUT this record has not come about by accident. We have a sound National, State and Club regulatory framework that guides us to sail in safe boats and carry the right safety gear, we encourage training and preparation for dangerous situations and we admire and respect competent seamanship. I think we should be proud of what we have achieved within the CD and we must never take what we have for granted.

Regards,
Tony Austin (CD Safety Officer)



2023 - The Year that Was!



Farewell 2023!



Australia Day Black Jacks Point



Jailbreak Cruise final gathering - Kooroora Bay



Cruise to Taylor's Bay & Pt Wolstencroft



Set Sail for Soup at Sunshine



King's Birthday Long Weekend Cruise



Visit and Safety Training MRLM



October 11 Lake Cruise



September Sail Past



*Here's to another great year of sailing, enjoying
the Lake and catching up with a great bunch of
people!
Bring on 2024!*



Bonnells Bay

Ray Kiely



5 MINUTES IN THE CD SPOTLIGHT....

Q5. Can you share with us one of the most memorable / enjoyable passages you've ever taken.

Both these are memorable, but the one both Bob and I treasure most is our first Lord Howe Island Race, not the race itself but the being there, and with a crew of six, four of whom had never been out of sight of land. We finished early afternoon on the Tuesday, having started off Lion Island the previous Saturday.

We were somewhat confused as to what the exact ship time was on arrival as we gained time sailing East, and it was also DST. Didn't really matter as we were now on LHI time. On arrival we were escorted by Clive Wilson through the North Passage and to a mooring in Sylphe's Hole, where we waited whilst another boat completed mooring. We had to furrow our way through the sand to get into the deep water and pick up the mooring which was attached to an old engine carcass clearly visible in the crystal-clear water. *Wheelbarrow*, another half-tonner from the race made three.



Above: Ready to race. Bob makes the final check. Below: Moored in Sylphe's Hole. L to R, Wheelbarrow, Legend, Jesphan.

We were ferried ashore by Clive Wilson and walked along the jetty and lay down in the adjacent grassy patch, just clear of Kentia Palm Fruit drying in the Sun. We had taken a cold six-pack of Tooheys with us, and life could not get any better. A moment to never forget and never repeat, it was euphoric.



We had accommodation booked at Trader Nicks and after settling in, we hired bikes from Clive Wilson and had a look around, stopped for a drink at the Bowling Club until they closed then proceeded to the Milky Way to continue our modest celebration. Tomorrow would be a fish fry and the results announced and then we would prepare to host a party. This was an LMYC tradition started a few years ago and the catering was the sole responsibility of Wal Russell, a veteran, and who wouldn't have it any other way.

This was the sixth LHI Race and was conducted by Gosford Aquatic Club, firstly for members of that club to a maximum of twenty-five, a maximum imposed by LHI and if this number is not achieved, then the remainder is open to other clubs. Presentations started with a series of the 'First GAC yacht to finish, the second GAC yacht to finish and so on until all GAC boats had a trophy for something or other, then it was the rest. "First on IOR, *Legend* and a few details". It really didn't matter; the atmosphere and camaraderie were undeniable.



Balls Pyramid, a volcanic rock just juts out of the sea. Impossible to see at night, unlit and no warning surrounds.

The first few races had Balls Pyramid as a rounding Mark. Ball's Pyramid is an isolated rock jutting out of the sea about 11 NM Southeast of LHI, some 1800 feet high, and at it longest, a little over ½

Unlit, many heart stopping tales were listened to in awe about near misses, and *Piccolo*, from LMYC and winner of the 1976 Hobart Race, well crewed and with an accomplished navigator missed it altogether and kept sailing on. By the time they discovered their mistake, it was too late. That this was possible is understandable due to the navigation aids available to us, celestial sights and more recently RDF, which had limitations. The method we used relied heavily on the accuracy of your DR and was the creation of Marc St. Hillaire in the 1870's, with many refinements over the ensuing 100 years, primarily Bands of Latitudes with pre-worked calculations.

In the week before the start, I would draw up three or four, night sky maps showing only the brightest stars, marking their altitude above the horizon with concentric circles 10° to 90° apart and a line indicating true bearing (Azimuth) from the centre point, this information was available from the Nautical Almanac They would be used by the navigator primarily for the dawn sights. Before dawn the navigator would identify the best stars, trying to get three good ones well separated to get a good fix. He would set the sextant roughly to the altitude of his first star from the sky map and wait for the horizon to appear, hoping dark clouds low down on the horizon wouldn't be blocking his view of it. There are only fifteen minutes of twilight (in this latitude band) when both the stars and horizon are visible. At the point when the star sits on the horizon, he calls 'stop' and the time is recorded. All this time he is hanging on to the back stay as best he can. In the lead up to the race I swapped a Fire Extinguisher which was surplus to my needs for a new Casio digital watch, much easier to read than analogue.

Throughout the day, sights of the sun would provide a 'Line of position". You could be anywhere on this line until a second line, 'an intercept' was obtained, albeit some miles further on. There is much more to write on this art, but not now. In later years of the race, and with cheap access to GPS, navigators were required to do a set of celestial observations and attach them to the Race Declaration.

We were lucky to arrive in daylight, but *Scorpion* a Farr 2 tonner and second to finish arrived in the dark and sailed straight onto the reef, and despite the surge only suffered a damaged rudder. A couple of other boats broke away as the high tide surged over the reef and one, a Savage 42 was severely damaged.

But now it was Party Time.

We set up in a picnic area a little off the beach from where we could see the three boats moored in Sylphe's Hole and people began to trickle in, some we knew and some we didn't. One of the new people was Julie Middleton from *Jesphan*, an amazing young woman and who had just sailed single handed from Fiji. More detail on Julie is available in CruiseLetter # 315, October 2015 and more general information on LHI by Maureen in #314 the month before. There are others of course.



Left: Some were at tables, others just lolled about.

Ian Tringham and me seal the occasion. Next year in Hobart the roles would be reversed.



Other new friends were Ian Tringham and his crew from *Wheelbarrow*. They could not have been happier if they had won it. They were great blokes.

Ian worked for Mariner Yachts and when he arrived each morning, he was kitted out in a space suit, given a 'Chopper Gun' and for the rest of the day laid up GRP Mariner hulls. Over time he was able to assemble enough left-overs to build *Wheelbarrow*, which was designed by American Dick Carter, a name which influenced the boat's name and the design of a crew tee-shirt by Ian's girlfriend Elizabeth. Later in the year they competed in the 1979 Hobart and the Race Committee were not amused by Elizabeth's design, they were scandalized!

The problem with open ended parties is Gate Crashers, and we were not immune. Without any warning and out of the blue we were terrorized by a large swarm of dubious looking cyclists.

Then as they continued to buzz around, some faces started to resemble someone else. But who? Then Fred Williams skidded to a stop in front of us, with a big smile all over his face. Fred had a water ski manufacturing factory at Gateshead and was big in the industry including exporting, and was brother to Sir Keith Williams, founder of Hamilton Island Resort.

Fred was a great salesman and sold the idea of chartering a 'plane to twenty-one other members of LMYC to fly to LHI and help us celebrate. It was great few days and LHI would never be the same. Fred was Commodore 1983-85, and later proprietor of Marmong Point Marina, which he renamed Marmong Cove Marina.

In the 1980 Sydney-Hobart *Wheelbarrow* was sailed extremely well and was First in Division D. On presentation day Prize Recipients were invited to bring their boats from Constitution Dock to the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania's marina, where Ian and his crew were met by the 'Blazers' and their attire vetted. There would not be a repeat of last year's egregious incident.



But back to the Island where we were getting ready to leave. We had some ice cream containers at the butchers to be filled with water and frozen for the return passage. We arrived back in the Lake on Thursday 8th. November, crossing the Bar about 0300. It took us less than three days and we had sailed some 65 nm. less.

L to R: Ian, his brother, Bob. Me & June with her back to Wally the photographer. It was the worst presentation I have been to.

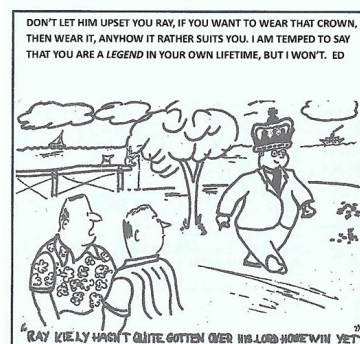
We missed the cut for the 1981 race, but with two weeks to go we were advised of a cancellation and two days to accept or reject. Frantic 'phone calls, some new crew, slipping and 1000 other things, but we made it. We finished in the dark, about midnight and pitch black. Then a single car headlight pierced the black, illuminating us and the outer distance mark. We were told by radio we had finished. We had been sailing parallel to the reef for the last half mile or so and about fifty yards clear.

It was a good landfall. Not long after finishing we were told by Alan Patterson then our Sec. Manager who was in the Radio Control Room at Gosford, that we had won!

We went again in 1983 and were well beaten into Second place by Mercedes IV, a Two Tonner. In 1984 we were a DNF and arrived two days late under power. We were caught in the centre of a slow moving high.

Noel Davies was a regular contributing cartoonist to *Forecast* at the time and this is how he saw it. The Editor, Ron Booth added his comments.

What we did in those five years of campaigning *Legend* in long offshore races could not be done today. Little boats have been squeezed out by big money and big boats and the LHI Race with them. Even Club Short Offshore Races no longer attract the numbers they once did. The contribution of my crews in time, labour, and their personal financial contribution made it possible.



June and me on *Legend* on the Lake Circa 1980, despite its lack of creature comforts, we had some wonderful times cruising or as the Water Rat said to the Mole *'Believe me my young friend, there is nothing, absolutely nothing half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats'*. Sounds pretty much like today's Cruising Division. Good people and common purpose, messing about in boats.



Whatever your sailing preferences and age is no limitation, people along the way make yachting and boating the absorbing pleasure that it is.

A day or so after we won our second LH Race, I received this Telegram:

Ray Kiely Yacht Legend, Lord Howe Island.
Good work, how about stomping around a bit
and giving someone else a go next year.
Barrow Boys

When I invited Ray to share his sailing story I was expecting five short answers to the five short questions I had posed - what he has given us is an in-depth and interesting insight into how the love of sailing can enrich our lives. My sincerest thanks to Ray for this thoughtful reflection. I know only a little of the effort it took! Still a legend! Ed.



FREE!

LMYC tops - ladies fleece (size 14) and long sleeve sun-shirt (size 18) - excellent condition. Be ready for any weather - always great to have on board!

Donated by retiring CD member.

Contact Ed. seysener@gmail.com

For Your Calendar

11th December - Christmas Party in lieu of General Meeting

This year as a bit of a change as we will be gathering in the beautiful Bayview area of LMYC for platters of delicious finger food and drinks. Starting at 5.30 pm. See you there as we celebrate another year of wonderful friendships and fun!



31st December - New Years Eve

Fleet to anchor south-side of Fishing Point.
Relocate New Years Day to Wangi RSL foreshore at 0930 for a BYO breakfast with visiting crews from RPA.



26th January - Australia Day

With Australia Day occurring on a Friday next year the plan is to extend our celebrations to a long-weekend cruise! Watch this space!



12th February - General Meeting – Bridgedeck Room

Our first meeting for 2024 will start at 7pm. A table will be booked for dinner from 5.30pm onwards for those wishing to share a meal prior to the meeting.

25th February - 8th March - 2024 Pittwater Cruise

Mark these dates in your diary for a fun-filled escape to one of the most beautiful cruising destinations in Australia! Spend time with good friends exploring quiet bays and waterways; join in games, drinks and dinners ashore and indulge in free days to kayak, read, rest Why wouldn't you spread your wings and fly!



Thankyou!

Our Cruiseletter is enriched by your contributions — all items of interest or handy hints are always gratefully received! Ed.

My thanks this month to :-

Ralph Asquith

Tony Austin

Ray Kiely

Happy Christmas to you all!

