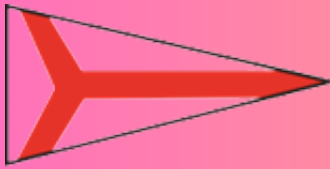
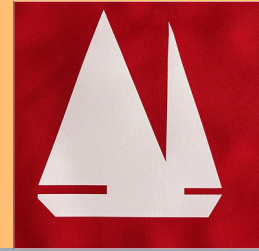


LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB



CRUISING
DIVISION



CRUISELETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025 | ISSUE NO.423



GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER

**NEXT OUTING SAT 6TH SEPT - LMYC OPENING DAY SAILPAST
DON'T FORGET TO DECORATE YOUR BOAT
THEME: "FAVOURITE ROCK AND ROLL BAND".**

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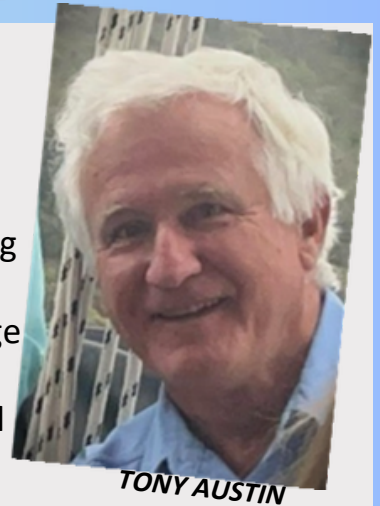
Front Cover - "Rio" at anchor somewhere up north
From Lisa



SKIPPER'S REPORT

Greetings Fellow CD Members,

The last month has been an interesting one and we have many exciting events on the horizon. The Swansea Channel Third Stage dredging project has been completed and most vessels will now find the passage in and out of the channel far less intimidating. The purchase of a dedicated dredge and sand distribution system is progressing well and we hope to see that project bedded in by mid-2026.



TONY AUSTIN

While the recent weather has been nothing if not extreme it has resulted in quite a few vessels breaking their mooring and either sinking or being washed ashore. This has resulted in many vessels being declared to be derelict or abandoned by NSW Maritime and hence removed from the lake. This is a good thing. We now have a Hunter Mooring Special Interest Group (made up of reps from the larger sailing clubs on Lake Mac and Port Stephens) working with Maritime to rationalise the rather complex current system and there is much good will on both sides.

Hopefully all CD members are aware that this year is the 40th Anniversary for the CD and we hope to recognise this milestone with a special celebration at our Christmas party in December. The committee will be officially launching a new CD Burgee and a fantastic polo-styled shirt. Please let all your friends who are, or have been, CD members that this is THE event to attend in 2025!

Our meeting in August was well attended with a panel discussion on rope selection and maintenance, answering many common questions from the cruising community. The following practical session was also well attended and saw members sharing tips on how best to splice or whip the range of ropes commonly seen on modern cruising boats.

Our meeting in September promises to be highly entertaining with Ross and Anne Shirtley sharing their experiences as very active members of Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie. MRLM is the busiest base in NSW and there are many lessons to be learned by even the most prudent boater. This meeting also provides us with an opportunity to present our annual donation to our local unit whose members give us outstanding service every day of every year.

Finally, make sure that you put the Ivan Irwin Cruise into your diaries. This year our host is Phil Cunningham and he has selected a theme of 'Eat the Lake'! This cruise promises to have a great mix of sailing, serious social get togethers over fine food and beverages, coupled with great opportunities to practice some essential safety skills. Like all CD cruises the format is highly flexible and you do not need to sign up for the entire program.

Very best wishes and safe sailing,

Tony Austin
Skipper

Rio's Northern Sailing Adventures

Lisa and Geoff

It has long been a dream of Geoff's to sail up the east coast and cruise around the Whitsundays. The biggest hurdle was to get me sailing fit/willing! After a few years of sailing Midlife around the Lake and doing the Broughton Island trip and Jervis Bay hop, together with some ocean safety courses, we decided that if I was to accompany Geoff we needed to go to the dark side and purchase a catamaran!



After owning Rio for a couple of weeks and with one week to fully kit her out, we joined the Pittwater cruise and had a ball. Water makers, fridge/freezers, showers and a stable platform are a gamechanger for this landlubber! The east coast cruise now became a reality and the planning began.

Like all good intentions, nothing goes completely to plan! Delayed by a month with engine work, we finally met up with Jo and Janette on Sunday 15 June for dinner at the LMYC ready for an early start. After a bit of drama through the channel and at the bridge we made our way to Broughton Island and enjoyed some fabulous sailing (around 9kts) and saw our first breaching whales. We also promptly learned how not to beach a dinghy!

Our travels up the coast comprised of some fantastic scenery and sailing, beautiful beaches and of course, as Tony likes to say "fixing boats in exotic locations". We began with replacing a muffler in Port Macquarie and have since replaced a fresh water pump, raw water pumps, fixed a squeak in the engine, and now need to have the generator repaired and the auto anchor fixed. Geoff is really getting to know the boat!

Highlights are the days of good wind and fast sailing, including a beautiful spinnaker run from Keppel Bay to Port Clinton. We have seen turtles and dugongs, whales and dolphins, and caught enough fish to keep us pescatarians! We have also met up with friends and family along the way and enjoyed many a great restaurant meal and fabulous walking tracks.

Best meal so far was "The Jetty" restaurant on Bribie Island. Best sunsets were between Lake Macquarie and Mable Island, with favourites at Rainbow Beach and Fraser Island. So many amazing places to see and walks to do it is impossible to choose favourites. I did love the little sea caves on Hummocky Island, and the water was crystal clear. Great Keppel was another favourite – great walks and the water was amazingly clear. We enjoyed a 4wd bus tour of Fraser Island and saw dingos walking the beach. We have enjoyed walking many lovely tracks through bush and rainforest, up hill and down!

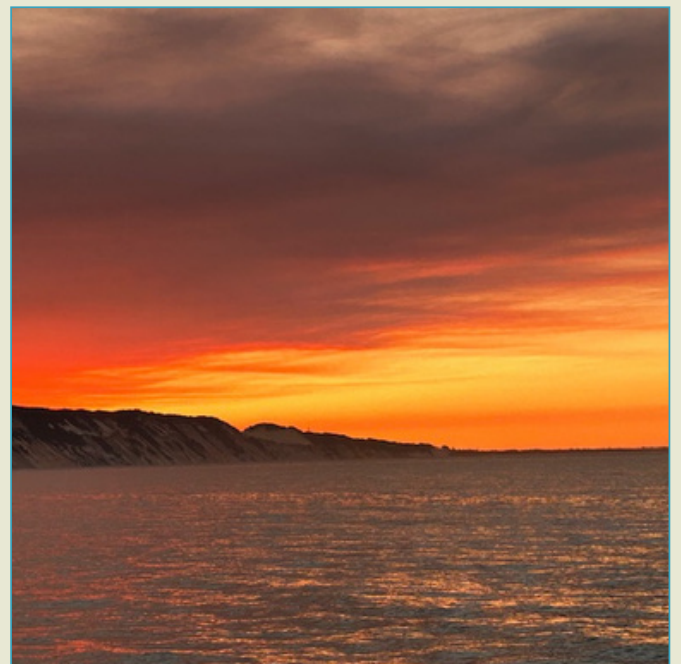
Of course it's not all plain sailing, and we did have a couple of hairy passages. One from Island Head Creek which was meant to be 15-20kt with 1m swell, and when we got out there it was about 2 1/2 kts current against wind of about 20-25 kts and 3m+ waves – a real experience. We were doing about 7kts through the water but only about 4 1/2 kts over ground so we ended up cutting the trip short and pulling into Supply Bay.

Most of the bars weren't too bad but we had a couple of tense moments. The Southport Seaway was an eye opener, entering into chaos. We had jet skis, fishing boats and massive cruisers barrelling past creating massive wake, and then had to dodge suicidal surfers paddling right across in front of us in the middle of it all!

So far we're up to day 72 and have travelled approx. 1042 nautical miles and are nowhere near ready to head home! Weather is amazing and Rio is handling everything we throw at her really well. I am looking forward to some more snorkelling now the weather is warmer. So glad we took the plunge and came on our east coast cruise. Hope all is well with everyone at home and you are enjoying cruising our beautiful lake and getting some better weather.



Lisa and Geoff with Natalie and Steve



“GIVE & TAKE” WRAPS UP HAMILTON ISLAND REGATTA

Cruising Division members, Russell and Kate Williams, completed the Hamilton Island Regatta week on their beautiful Beneteau 48 "Give & Take" with a 6th place in the Non-Spinnaker Division of 15 entries. A very closely contested series saw 3 points separating 2nd on 23 points to G&T on 26 points (including two 2nd places). Perfect sailing conditions of 10 to 16 knots prevailed, with sunny skies in the third week of August at the Whitsundays providing quite a contrast to the continual rain at Lake Macquarie.

Russell and Kate commenced their journey north in May, with anchorages including Great Sandy Straits, Lady Musgrave Island, Island Head and Pancake Creeks, Great Keppel and Middle Percy, before making the Hamilton Island Marina their base from mid June. “Give & Take” has commenced the long voyage home and expect to return to the lake in September.

Mark Clemments



Ivan Irwin Cruise


Phil and Eleanor - Coordinators

Cruise starts Sunday 5th October at  for dinner at 18:00.



Monday we go to Kooroora Bay and go exploring in our dinghies under the Fennell Bay bridge into Fennell and Edmunds Bays. After a BBQ in Bolton Point Park.

Tuesday it's down to Bonnells Bay for the last bus  for dinner. After it's walk back down the hill.

Wednesday back to Cockle Bay for a visit to  coffee at  then a dinghy ride up Cockle Creek for dinner at 

Thursday we go back to Bonnells Bay for dinghy ride via Lake Eraring up Dora Creek to 

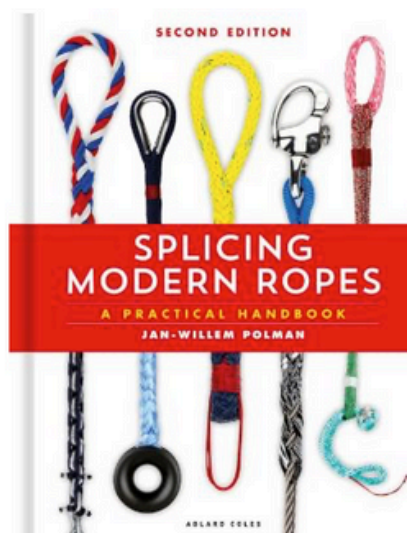
Friday sail to Wangi Bay for dinner at 

Saturday a walk to the Wangi Wangi Bakehouse for morning tea/brunch then maybe Dobel House. After sail to Toronto and you guessed it, dinner. This time at  in the 

Other activities will be planned and announced on the 09:00 morning sched.

Cruisers are asked to bring a curry in case weather interferes with a planned activity. We can find a sheltered anchorage and do the curry thing.

Book of the Month



For any seafarer, splicing rope is an essential skill. But the traditional 3-strand rope is fast disappearing. So how do you splice braided rope? This is the ultimate guide to this crucial knowledge. Most of the techniques are easy to master – and also fun to do. See why splices are better – and stronger – than knots or shackles for joining or shortening rope, and follow the photographs and steps to find out how to splice efficiently. While a knot can reduce the strength of a rope by as much as 50%, a well-spliced rope loses only 5–10%. The techniques, insights and suggestions within these pages will be invaluable to all boaters, whether recreational or commercial. This refreshed new edition has been updated to take into account developments in fibre technology and includes new splicing techniques and updated photography.

\$44.95

The theme for the last month has been largely about ropes, and while we are not in the habit of advertising things, this book may be of interest to our members. It can be purchased from "Boat Books Australia". Also note the following links.

Animated Knots by Grog - www.animatedknots.com

Grog's Knots - Apps for iOS & Google

New England Ropes: www.neropes.com

Premium Ropes: www.premiumropes.com

Safety Snippet

Vessel Engineering Systems

A review of the AMSA Reportable Incident database shows that 'Engineering System' failures are a major cause of vessel damage or injury. With many vessels lying idle over the winter months there is an increased risk that engine/gearbox controls or steerage systems may have become stiff (or even frozen) through corrosion or breakdown of lubricants. This may not become obvious until you actually start to operate the vessel.

It is prudent seamanship to test ALL operations before leaving your berth or mooring and again once underway but still close to 'home'. In particular, a gearbox that will not reliably select forward or reverse can be the source of enormous embarrassment as you try to manoeuvre out of your berth or off your mooring!

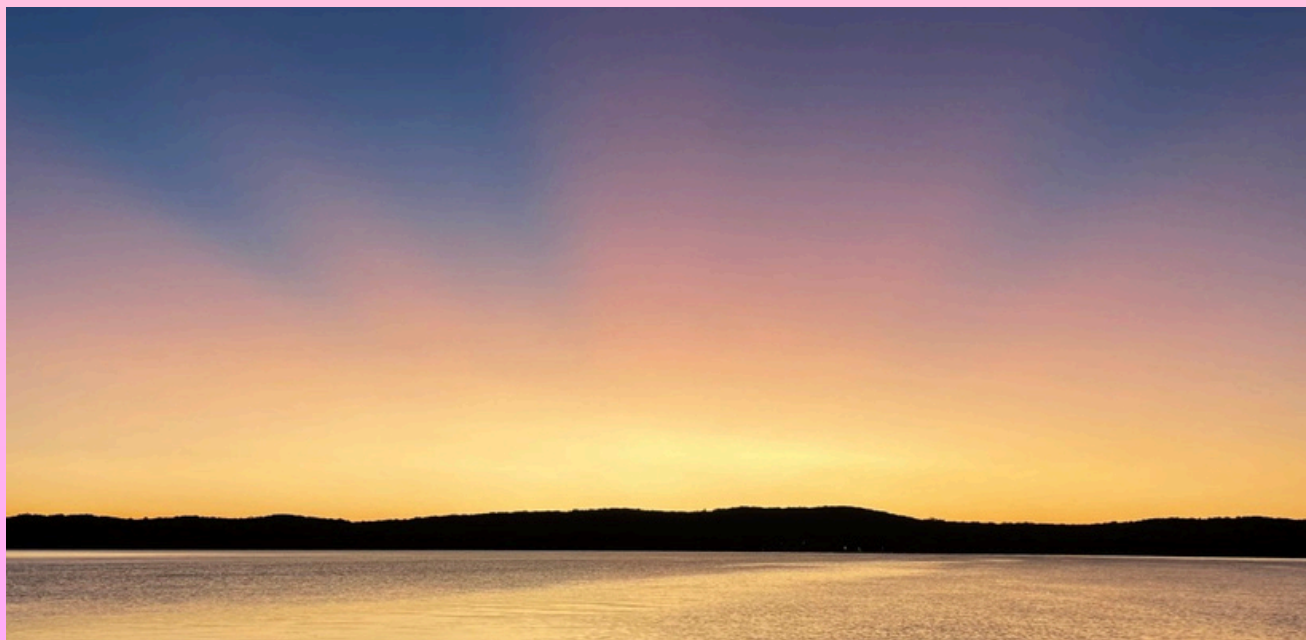
Recommendation:

If you haven't used your vessel for a few weeks or months make sure you test all engineering systems in a systematic way before leaving your berth/mooring:

1. Warm up your engine(s). Confirm water flow from exhaust.
2. Confirm that there are no lines in the water near the prop(s).
3. Engage forward gear and rev engines up to at least cruising RPM.
4. Return to neutral and then engage reverse gear. Rev up to at least cruising RPM.
5. Return to neutral.
6. Check steering system for full and free movement. Ideally test autopilot function as well.

This won't guarantee that you identify all potential problems but should reveal anything major.

Safe Sailing,
Tony



YACHT ROPES - SELECTION AND SAFETY

This article is a summary of the discussion on ropes led by Ralph at our August meeting, and the practical session we had at LMYC in lieu of an on-water outing.

Ropes are made from fibres of various natural or synthetic yarns twisted together, and have a high tensile strength suitable for dragging and lifting.

Most manufacturers have online sites to help you select the most appropriate ropes for a specific use. A rule of thumb is to replace a rope with the same as originally specified for your yacht. Factors to consider are tensile strength, Elasticity and softness for handling. While cost is also a factor, it pays to add a few metres to allow for wear point adjustment over the lifespan of the rope.

Types of rope include:

Polyester Double Braid: This is a popular choice due to its strength, durability and low stretch. It is often used for sheets, halyards and control lines.

Nylon: This offers strength, good elasticity and resistance to UV damage. It is commonly used for mooring and anchor lines.

Polypropylene: This is a lightweight, buoyant option, suitable for short mooring lines, tender tethers or rescue purposes.

Dyneema or Spectra. These are made of high-strength fibres, and used for applications requiring exceptional strength, such as rigging on racing boats.

The most important characteristics to consider are strength, stretch, UV and abrasion resistance, heat resistance, grip/softness and buoyancy.

Rope Maintenance.

It is essential to understand and exercise a good rope inspection and maintenance routine. Rope failure can be catastrophic and life threatening.

Visual Examination: Look for signs of wear, such as fraying, abrasions and UV degradation, especially where the rope is exposed to sunlight. Check the rope's diameter, and particularly inspect connection points, such as splices, knots and where ropes interact with cleats and blocks etc.

Tactile Examination: Run your hands along the ropes to feel for any anomalies.

Cleanliness: Rinse ropes with fresh water to remove salt and debris. Use mild soap and avoid harsh chemicals such as chlorine. Washing in a washing machine with the ropes in a garment bag is a great option.

Rope lifespans can be lengthened by:

Protection from chafing: Use guards or protectors where ropes rub against hardware.

End-for-end the rope: This moves wear points to different sections of the rope, or adjust the length of the rope by half a metre or so, to move the wear point along. This presupposes you allowed for more than the minimum length of rope at purchase.

Store ropes properly: Keep them out of sunlight where possible, and away from dirt, mould etc.

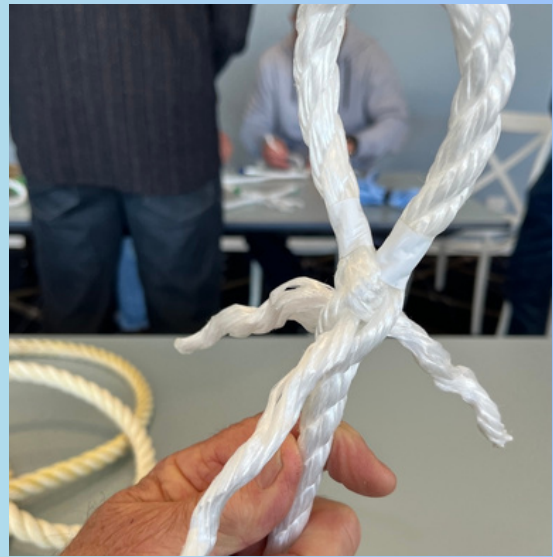
Time: A rule of thumb would be to replace all running rigging after 10 years.

Practical Session

A very successful practical session on all rope matters was held on Saturday 23rd August at the LMYC Bridgedeck room. Twenty one members attended and we were pleased to see a number of new members coming along. The discussion was lead by Tony, and demonstrations and guidance was provided by other club members. Practice was had in splicing ropes and tying specialist knots, both with polyester ropes and the much more difficult Spectre/Dyneema type ropes.

These are photos from the day:





What' Happening at LMYC

Don't forget to read the LMYC Newsletter, "Forecast" to keep up-to-date with our overall Club's developments and activities. Some highlights this month include:

- **The opening of the new Lakeside Pavillion (Marquee).** The CD is holding its next monthly meeting there.
- **Repairs are underway for the car park** which was eroded on the southern side during some of our recent east coast lows.
- **The Club's Opening Day** is on Saturday 6th September and has always been a fun day for members of the CD to join with our racing colleagues to help get their season underway. The theme is "Favourite Rock and Roll Band", so come along, decorate your boat and join in the festivities.
- **LMYC has been nominated as a finalist** in the Australian Sailing NSW & ACT Club of the Year award. Congratulations to all concerned!
- **LMYC Board Director, Eleanor Cunningham**, who is the LMYC rep. on our the CD Committee as well as an active CD participant, and also the LMYC SheSails rep., has been selected as a finalist for the SheSails Award. **CONGRATULATIONS ELEANOR!**
- **The Club's Degustation Night** is on Friday 26th September featuring 5 courses designed by Crusoes. Tickets are available at the LMYC Reception.



A bit of nostalgia: Those were the days!
Super Heroes from the 2016 Pittwater Cruise.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

On Water & Practical Events

SEPTEMBER

LMYC Opening Day Sailpast
Saturday 6th Sept

OCTOBER

Ivan Irwin Cruise - Lake Mac
Sun 5th - Sat 11th Oct

NOVEMBER

Cruise to Sydney, Botany Bay & Port
Hacking

Starts Sun 2nd Nov

Also

Lake Cruise 14th - 15 Nov

GENERAL MEETINGS - Marquee

The September General Meeting will start at 7pm in the new Marquee.
A table will be booked for dinner from 5:30pm onwards for those wishing to share a meal prior to the meeting.

Dates for the 2025 General Meetings:

September	8 th	Guest Speaker - Ross and Anne Shirtley, topic: Marine Rescue
October	13 th	Guest Speaker - TBA
November	17 th	Guest Speaker - BSO from Maritime TBA
December	8 th	Christmas Party

Our Meetings are a great way to find out what's happening and to get to know your fellow CD Members a little better.

THANK YOU!

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

Many thanks this month to:

- Lisa and Geoff for their great article.
- Ralph and Tony for the ropes presentations and practical sessions.

