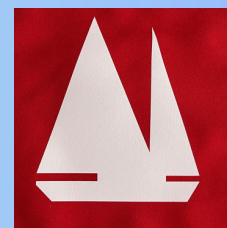


CRUISING DIVISION



CRUISELETTER

OCTOBER 2025 | ISSUE NO.424



On a mooring at Brown's Bay April Outing 2025

What's on this month

Ivan Irwin Cruise: 5-12th October. Details p 4.

General Meeting: 13th October 2025; Bridgedeck Room

Guest Speaker: Greg Hodge, Australian Shipping Industry (see p. 11)

Contents:

	<u>Page:</u>
Skipper's Report:	2
Christmas Party:	3
What's happening at LMYC:	3
Ivan Irwin Cruise:	4
Lake Matters:	5
Marine Rescue NSW:	6
Clarence River Cruise and Race:	7
Safety Snippet:	8
A Bit of Nostalgia:	9
Docking Sticks:	10
Steve and Natalie's Trip North	11
Club Information:	12



Our latest member??

SKIPPER'S REPORT

Greetings fellow CD Members,

It is hard to believe that we are entering the final quarter of 2025. It has been a very busy year for many of us although in our case the poor boat has been rather neglected. Hopefully that is about to change with the start of the sailing season and many great events on the CD Cruise Calendar.

Phil (Equinox) has very kindly offered to organise our annual Ivan Irwin Cruise and is running quite a different program. There will be plenty of opportunities to do some longer leg sailing and hopefully get a chance to practice some safety drills to refresh the ageing memory. Where better to do this than on beautiful Lake Mac?



TONY AUSTIN

We seem to have quite a few boats interested in the cruise down to Sydney, Botany Bay and Port Hacking. This will include a fair bit of new territory for many members so come along and enjoy these new regions. Next year's cruising will start with our traditional Pittwater Cruise. This is always the highlight of our sailing calendar with something for everyone. If you haven't been on one then please come along - it is an excellent opportunity to get to know our newer members, share some fun and hone some sailing skills.

Hopefully all of you are aware of the involvement of LMYC in the Lake Mac City Council Aquatic Services Committee. The ASC has been very busy over the past few months looking at such things as moorings, derelict boat management, sewage pump-outs and dinghy storage on public lands. If you have any thoughts or suggestions please give me a call.

Now, is there anyone who is not aware that this year marks the 40th Anniversary of the Cruising Division? This is quite a milestone and we plan to celebrate this event at our annual Christmas Party that is held in lieu of our general meeting. Please help us to make this a great evening by coming along and encouraging any ex-members you know to come along as well. It should be a great night.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our very active member, Eleanor Cunningham, on winning the Australian Sailing 'SheSails' award at the annual presentations last month. She is an absolute dynamo in the number of tasks that she takes on and then quietly does an outstanding job in bringing everything together to achieve a great outcome.

Many CD members are also members of the Shag Islet Cruising Yacht Club (SICYC aka Shaggers). Hoping to re-invigorate the SICYC on Lake Mac we are planning to hold a Christmas luncheon on Thursday 4 December at Valentine Bowling Club. If you are a member put this date in your diary and dig out your polo shirts. It is a great opportunity to meet old friends.

Safe Sailing,
Tony Austin - Skipper.

Christmas party!

Monday 8th December, 2025

This year we are also celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Cruising Division. The format will be informal with finger food served in the Clubhouse. Some extra activities are planned to be held in the new Pavilion, so save the date and come along for a great evening. We would appreciate receiving any old photographs or memorabilia to display on the night.

Congratulations to Eleanor Cunningham on recently winning the Australian Sailing NSW & ACT, SheSails award presented at Saint George's Sailing Club. Eleanor has been a driving force behind the SheSails activities on Lake Macquarie, and is an active member of the CD. An award well deserved.



What's Happening at LMYC

LMYC FOREDECK UNION

This is an initiative of the LMYC racing fraternity to mentor both present and prospective sailors to become foredeck crew. The following is taken from the Commodore's report in "Forecast" in case you missed it:

Over twenty people gathered in the new Pavilion to hear what the Foredeck Union is all about. So, what is the Foredeck Union? You may ask. Well, it is not about fighting for more beers and less sail changes! The idea is about getting a community of people working the foredeck and those who have in the past with the intention of teaching and mentoring new crew into the mysteries of the bow of a racing yacht. As I reflect on the number of very experienced sailors in the room there must be several hundred years of experience in the room and all of them there to help anyone who wants to learn.

The meeting was intended to see how much interest there is to get this group and training together. Clearly there was much enthusiasm at the meeting to continue. I know there were Saturday sailors who could not attend so there will be another meeting on Saturday 11 October at 11am where there will be some practical training. If you're interested come along.

(Skipper Tony's comments): While this activity is very much focused on developing new racing crew I think it is relevant to CD members in two ways - it could help cruising sailors develop their sailing skills by spending some time on a racing boat AND it could help give us, as cruisers, the skills to more formally mentor new cruisers. I am a strong advocate for all sailors to do some time on a racing boat just to hone your skills and learn how to get the very best out of your boat. It also helps develop your sailing confidence as you are sailing on the edge more often and thus have first hand experience of what happens when things don't go to plan.

Also, there is a Facebook group "LMYC Foredeck Union".



LMYC CD IVAN IRWIN CRUISE (EAT THE LAKE) 2025



We will do scheds at 09:00 VHF channel 72 from Monday.

Before we start, bring emergency rations in case weather causes issues. We can pick a sheltered anchorage and have a curry night.

Sunday 5th Oct



Monday 6th Oct

Welcome to 2025 Ivan Irwin (Eat the Lake) Cruise. First up Rathmines for dinner in Club Catalina at 18:00. Over night here. There are 3 public moorings. Drop anchor and dinghy in or moor to the wharf. There is reasonable depth alongside. Equinox has even gone on the inside of the outer arm with her having a draft of 2.3m, but only had 100mm to spare. Probably best to chain dinghy to wharf.

Labour Day public holiday. Sail to Kooroora Bay. **WARNING: NSW YOUTH SAILING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN TORONTO AREA.** By 12:00 anchor on western side of Kooroora Bay, somewhere near the bridge and have lunch on board or bring it with you. Make sure you have lots of fuel in your dinghy, because at 13:00 we're going exploring beyond the bridge into uncharted territory, Fennell Bay and Edmunds Bay. 16:00 head ashore to Bolton Point Park for sundowners and BBQ dinner. Bring a table and/or chairs as there are only 2 tables there.

Tuesday 7th Oct



Cruise to Bonnells Bay and anchor near Bonnells Bay Public Jetty at 33°6.267'S - 151°32.232'E, The bay shoals after Shingle Splitters, but remains about 3.2m all the way in. 17:00 start going ashore and walk up to the bus stop at the Cnr Aloha Close & Waikiki Rd. Bring your Seniors Opal Card to catch the 278 Gov bus at 17:31. Don't be late as it's the last departure for the day. The bus takes us up the hill for 18:00 dinner at the [Bay Hotel Motel](#). We will have to walk back down the hill. It takes about 15 – 20 minutes to walk back.

Wednesday 8th Oct



Cruise to Cockle Bay (11.7nm) for a bit of culture at the Museum of Art and Culture Lake Macquarie yapang. Tours take about 20 minutes or you can self-guide. Don't get lost.

Coffee etc 13:00 in *Federici's* Café here at MAC yapang.

After the cultural part of the day, at 16:00 we go for a dinghy ride up Cockle Creek to Teralba Bowling Club for sundowners and at 18:00 dinner at Mr Zhou's Chinese Kitchen.

Thursday 9th Oct



Cruise down the Lake to Bonnells Bay and anchor somewhere within striking distance of Dora Creek. 16:30 dinghy ride to Lake Eraring then up Dora Creek to Dora Creek township to go to the Dora Creek Workers' Club by 18:00 for dinner. It's about a 2nm dinghy ride. Speed limit on Dora Creek is 4 knots. Tie up to the jetty just before the railway bridge. It's a 400m walk to the Workers Club or they have a courtesy bus. We will have to walk back. Make sure you have plenty of fuel and lights for dinghy ride back down the creek.

Friday 10th Oct



Set sail for Wangi Bay. Anchor in Wangi Bay or you may score a berth on Wangi District Workers' Club jetty. 18:00 dinner at the Wangi District Workers' Club.

Saturday 11th Oct



This morning at 11:00 we take a walk to Wangi Wangi Bakehouse Bakery for morning tea and a bit of exercise. Can't book here but we can always use Dobel Park across Dobel Drive if there isn't enough room. We might even have time to go to Dobel House. Did someone say Dobel? Dobel House is open from 13:00 on Saturdays, entry \$12.

In the afternoon more sailing and eating - this time to Toronto Bay for dinner at Ollie's in the Toronto Diggers at 18:00. Click link below for Ollie's menu.

<https://www.torontodiggers.com.au/ContentFiles/TorontoRSL/Documents/June%202025%20Ollies%20Menu.pdf>



Sunday 12th Oct

AND THAT'S ALL FOLKS - Phil

Lake Matters (October 2025)

Hot topics from the Lake Macquarie City Council Aquatic Services Committee (ASC) include:

1. The Swansea Channel. The program to create a robust solution to the channel siltation problem remains on track with a dedicated dredge being built. Plans have been developed for a sand redistribution system that will see sand being pumped to the northern end of Blacksmiths Beach.

2. Private Moorings. There has been much confusion and concern about the availability of future moorings for private vessels on Lake Macquarie. The processes behind the approval of mooring requests are complex and involve multiple government agencies. The presence of endangered *Posidonia australis* seagrass beds in many of the more popular parts of the lake further complicate the issue. Following the formation of a Hunter Moorings Special Interest Group (which includes members of the ASC) a letter to the Minister for Transport has been signed by the commodores of the larger sailing clubs. Geoff Edman and I met with Minister Yasmin Catley to solicit her support for our proposals and she gave us some excellent feedback on how best to address the issues.

3. Derelict dinghies stored on public foreshore lands. This has become problem with many abandoned dinghies becoming an eyesore, a hazard to children who play in the parks and a significant challenge to the gardening staff who look after the parks. Following a meeting with LMCC staff several ASC members have agreed to try to quantify the problem and develop strategies to manage the issue.

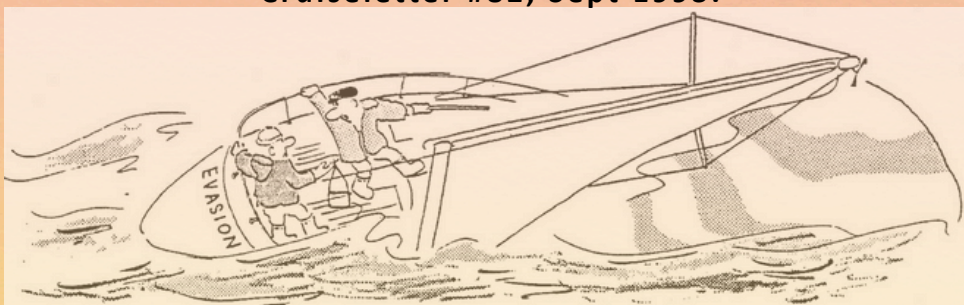
4. Sewage Pump-outs: The LMCC is committed to maintaining the health of the lake for all users. An important issue is the management of sewage stored onboard vessels using the lake. While there quite a few pump-outs (both public and private) on the lake, many cannot be safely accessed by larger deep draft yachts. A working group has been established to explore the current units and make recommendation to LMCC on the number needed, the locations and the accessibility issues that need to be considered. I have the 'honour' of chairing this group.

5. Hunter Water Desalination Plant. Work on the new desalination water plant at Belmont has commenced. Part of the project includes the creation of an inlet head and tunnel that will sit about 800m off the shore plant. Once work commences on this inlet there will be an absolute exclusion zone for all vessels around the work platform. Details will be provided to all boating groups later this year.

6. Council Collaboration. A recent press release advised that the mayors of LMCC and Central Coast Council have signed a collaboration agreement that will include management of the lake. This is great news as it can only lead to greater efficiency in managing the complex challenges preserving this fantastic resource.

Tony Austin (LMYC Rep; LMCC ASC)

**A reminder to get your tax done by the end of the month - from
Cruiseletter #82, Sept 1993.**



Do you really put this down to "Entertainment" on your tax return?

Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie

History

Marine Rescue was established in 2009 following the amalgamation of the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol (formed 1937), Australian Volunteer Coast Guard (formed 1961) and the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association Marine Fleet (formed 1969).

Mission

The Mission of Marine Rescue is Saving lives on water, 24 hours a day. The services provided by MR to boating include:

- 24/7 emergency Search and Rescue
- A Log On and vessel tracking service for recreational boaters
- Around-the-clock monitoring of marine radio for distress calls from boaters in trouble along the NSW coastline
- Boating safety education including boat, jet ski and marine radio licence courses.

The Headquarters of MRNSW is based at Cronulla. It is governed by a Board of Directors, and the Commissioner is a Government appointee. The Headquarters and regional support staffed are paid employees. There are 46 Units across the state based on NSW coast, plus Lord Howe Island, Alpine Lake and Moama on the Murray River. All of the individual units are manned entirely by volunteers. (Also see the MR structural chart and MRLM staff and equipment information on the following page).

The Hunter and Central Coast units are based at Port Stephens SARCC, Lemon Tree Passage, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie SARCC, Norah Head, Terrigal, Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Water (Point Claire).

In 2024, Lake Macquarie was the busiest unit in the State with over 650 assists (14% of NSW), compared with Port Hacking (440), Port Stephens (265) and Central Coast (239). Interestingly, Broken Bay only had 138 Assists.

Of the 653 Assists for Lake Macquarie, 64 were offshore; 1289 people were involved (139 offshore), and 125 were regarded as in danger to life. There were more than 34,000 radio/phone calls.

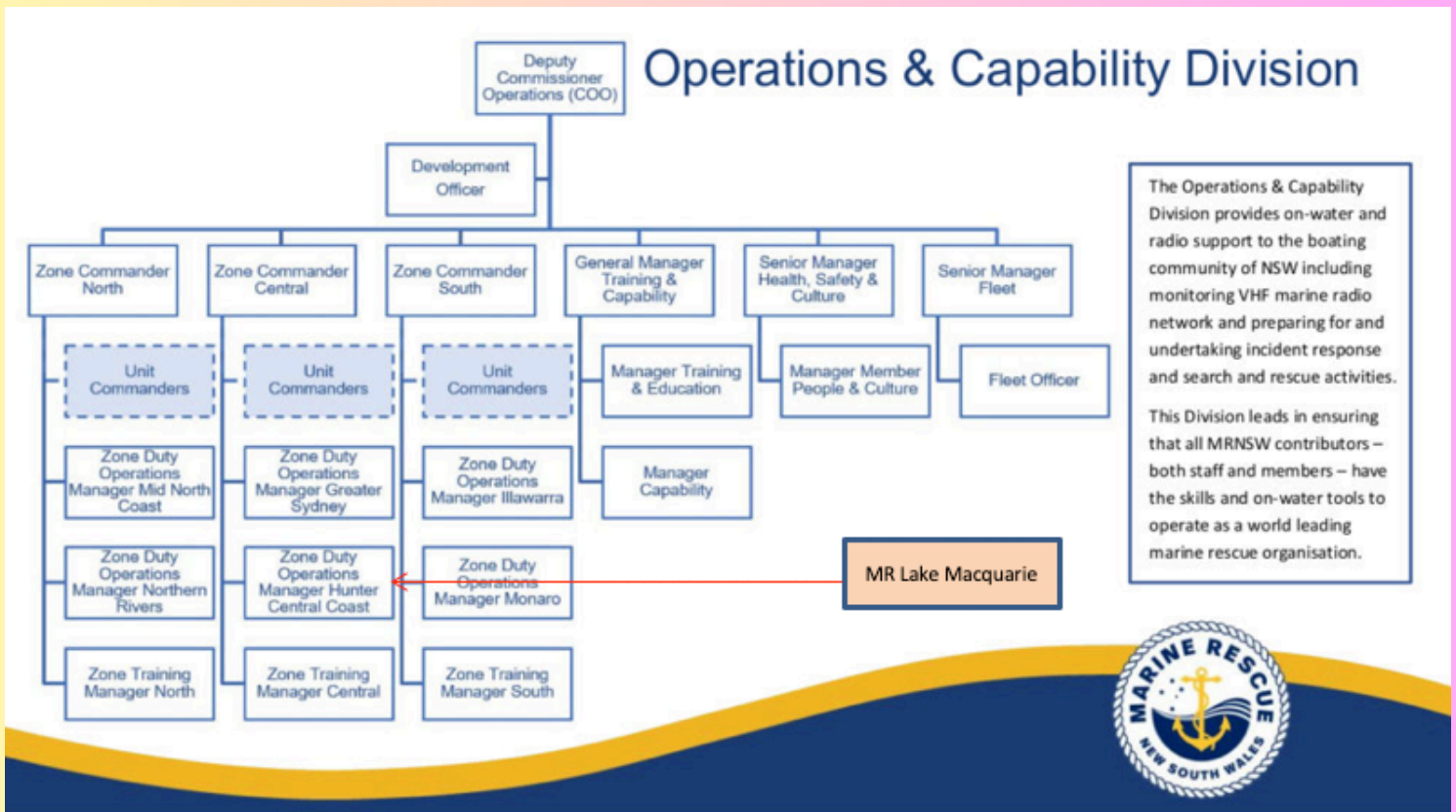
The total operating costs for MRLM in 2024 was \$183,000, and only \$49,500 of this was operating income from MR Headquarters, leaving a shortfall of \$133,500 to be provided from fundraising.

Marine Rescue can be contacted by mobile phone, VHF radio (Channel 16) or by using the MR App to log on and off.

Ross and Anne Shirtley.

Presentation at General Meeting 8th Sept 2025.





MARINE RESCUE
NEW SOUTH WALES

About Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie

- **160 volunteer members**
- **Operations, Administration, Fundraising, Unit support**
- **68 crew, 78 Radio, 12 Unit Support**
- **Incl 24 women**
- **Rescue Boats crews 12 hour day shift on duty; on call at night**
- **Radio crews 4 x 6 hours shifts per day**
- **24 x 7 x 365 operations - SARCC**
- **2 Rescue Vessels (1 x 8.5m ; 1 x 10m)**
- **2 RWC (Jet skis)**
- **1 tender**

Respondent to NSW Police - MAC

Over 3500 volunteers across NSW

Clarence River Cruise and Race: 13-19th October 2025

While this notice was only recently received and is obviously too late to plan for this year, it might be of interest to members for future consideration (assuming it is an annual event. (Ed.)

Commencing at Grafton and cruising downriver to Iluka Bay over three days, stopping off at beautiful anchorages and enjoying group dinners at local village eateries, on the way. The two-day Clarence Classic Race commences on Friday from Iluka back upriver to Harwood Bridge and then from Maclean to Brushgrove on the Saturday. We hope you can join us for all or part of what promises to be a great adventure.

The spectacular Clarence River is located on the North Coast of NSW and is one of Australia's largest waterways with over 400km of pristine water from source to sea and over 100 chartered river islands. For further information about the Clarence visit: <http://www.clarencetourism.com> or call: Will 0467 298597 or Alex 0488 422450.

Safety Snippet

The CD motto is 'Safe Social Sailing' and we have an enviable reputation as a group that highly values safety and works diligently to promote professional seamanship in all our boating activities. We are extremely fortunate that this is generally what we experience when we get together to go sailing. Despite the serious concerns of our non-sailing family and friends, coastal and lake sailing in Australia has an amazingly good safety record. Perhaps because of this we all run the risk of becoming complacent. The reality is that when things do go wrong the consequences can be catastrophic.

Safe sailing (and maritime operations in general) rely on people having high levels of knowledge and skill in all the complex facets of sailing and having boating systems that are reliable and fit for purpose. But these are not the only requirements for safe and happy boating. The reality is that the majority of accidents are not caused by equipment failure (or lack of technical knowledge) but by the decisions or actions of the skipper or crew. These errors, made with the best of intentions, can result in the loss of the vessel or even death.

Aviation is potentially a very dangerous undertaking. Gravity is unforgiving and engineering or human failure is quickly rewarded with catastrophic consequences. As engineering systems became more reliable it was realised that the weakest link in the safety system was the human being at the controls. This led to the development of a 'human factors' approach that explored why good, well-trained people could make so many fatal decisions. With the advent of very comprehensive human factors analysis a whole new field of safety science was created and we can now fly around the world many times over with less chance of being killed or injured than driving our car to the local shopping mall.

So what exactly are these 'human factors'? There is no 'one size fits all' definition but they include things that can impair decision making such as fatigue, loss of situational awareness, impaired decision making processes, ineffective communications and the impact of poor training programs. Using the lessons learned from the aviation world we now know how the human being can become the weak link and what we can do to minimise this risk. While formal safety training is appropriate in the commercial or military world, we can actually train ourselves to enhance our own safety and the safety of our crew.

There is far too much material to cover in one article so I propose to start with the problem of fatigue. We all know what fatigue is, but in many, if not most, cases we do not recognise that it is adversely affecting our performance. It is insidious in that it creeps up on us at any time of the day or night and reduces the agility and accuracy of our thinking and performance. Critical tasks like identifying the light patterns on other vessels, deciding if there is a risk of collision, correctly identifying a navigation aid (especially light houses at night) become real challenges with indecision and self-doubt making accurate decision making almost impossible. We should know ourselves well enough to know how much sleep we need and make sure that we do not make important decisions (or at least discuss them with others) if we suspect that we are fatigued. We should also do our passage planning being mindful that critical sections should be undertaken when we are most rested or at a peak of our natural circadian rhythm. Many sailing disasters occur at the end of the passage when time pressures may come into play, the fatigue has accumulated and familiar territory gives a false sense of security.

In my next article I would like to look at situational awareness - what it is and how it is critical to sailing safety.

Tony Austin

Our fun CD Olympics....

OAustralia

ORussia

O China

OIreland

our 4 teams



1st the torch ceremony



2nd Man Overboard



3rd Haul the Rope



Leonie ... 10 points for trying!!!
(one foot in a cast)

4th Toss the Oar



5th Monkey Fist Target



6th Abandon Ship Relay



Docking Sticks

Richard Masson

Bringing a boat up to a jetty and safely tying up seems to be one of the more difficult boating skills to master, particularly with an unfavourable wind. There always seems to be something that can go wrong and we've all seen videos of 'crashes' where equipment is damaged, egos bruised or worse, people in the water or injured.

A few years ago, while searching the internet for something else, I came across a video of a crew member effortlessly tying up a large power boat to a jetty using a boat hook and a "Docking Stick".

The stick is made of PVC pipe which 'snaps' on to a standard 25mm diameter boat hook. It allows the dock line to be formed into a loop for attaching the line to a dock cleat or around a bollard or piling. The boat hook then is easily unsnapped from the docking stick/dock line combination allowing the line to be snugged up and tied off.

Intrigued by the video, I ordered a "Docking Stick" online and it has since become part of our standard docking procedure on 'Jodi'. Not having a mid-ship cleat, I've found that using the Docking Stick with the line through the mid-ship fairlead and back to a cockpit winch has been a good combination for us.

With the loop at the end of your boat hook, I've found you don't have to even get the vessel that close to the jetty in order to snag a cleat. Once hooked from the mid-ship, the vessel can just be just pulled onto the jetty with the winch or a little forward throttle if necessary. This technique works really well for single-handed operation as well.

More information and some videos are available at the product web site here:

<http://www.dockingstick.com/>

The design is pretty simple and would certainly lend itself to a DIY project. I would think the only difficulty would be to get the snap-off tension just right. Somebody on YouTube has made a DIY version from two lengths of electrical conduit glued together here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgSXSFUHhbo>



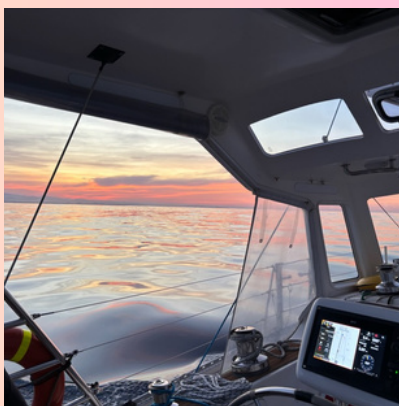
Steve and Natalie's Cruise North

(Note: This article was written for last month's Cruiseletter. Apologies to Steve and Natalie. (Ed).

We left Swansea heads on a high tide on May 14 and sailed to Port Stephens where we spent a few days at Nelson Bay at anchor. The weather wasn't great and with bad weather forecast, we decided to head north in an attempt to get away from the rain and high seas. We arrived in Coffs Harbour at 11.30am after 26 hrs at sea. However, conditions were not great in the outer harbour and we couldn't secure a berth in the inner harbour, so we decided to push north again, leaving at 2230 that evening after a meal and rest.

We arrived in Yamba after a 16 hour sail at 8.30am in time for the high tide at Yamba bar. This decision to leave Coffs proved fortuitous as the weather deteriorated south of Yamba for the next week, and spending a week at Coffs in the outer harbour wouldn't have been much fun. We stayed in Yamba for a week enjoying the sunshine. Our favourite activity was walking out to the break wall to see the bar conditions, which gave us appreciation of the importance of timing the tide and weather conditions. We then left Yamba Sunday 25 May and travelled to Southport crossing the bar at 2030.

We spent a lovely 5 days anchored in Marine Stadium Bay and then travelled on high tide through the inner passage, where we were required to travel under electrical wires (lucky we measured the mast height in Yamba). We are currently anchored at Macleay Island at the southern entry to Moreton Bay, hiding from a strong southerly wind. Next stop Bribie Island, Tangalooma Wreck and a week at Mooloolaba, before tackling the Wide Bay bar.



October Guest Speaker: 'A Quick Snapshot of Shipping in Australia' by Greg Hodge.

The committee is always seeking to offer interesting guest speakers covering a wide range of topics. This month we are delighted to present Greg Hodge. Greg has held a wide range of senior executive roles within the Australian and international shipping industries including a period as Head of Forgacs Engineering during the build of ship blocks for HMAS Sydney. Greg, amongst many other industry roles, is currently Chair, Lloyd's Register Industry Advisory Committee. Greg is also a Community Representative on the LMCC Aquatic Services Committee and owns a wide range of watercraft (unfortunately none with sails!). Tony.



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Mark Clements 0400 716 756



**The Club's new Pavilion
replaced the Marquee**

GENERAL MEETINGS - Bridgedeck Room

The General Meetings will start at 7pm in the Bridgedeck room. A table will be booked for dinner from 5:30pm onwards for those wishing to share a meal prior to the meeting. Our meetings are a great way to find out what's happening and to get to know fellow CD members.

For your Calendar

- October:** - Ivan Irwin Cruise, 5-12th Oct.
- General Meeting 13th. Guest Speaker, Greg Hodge,
Australian Shipping Industry.
- November:** - Sydney Cruise, Start 2nd Nov. Details TBA.
- General Meeting, 17th Nov. Guest Speaker: Boating
Safety Officer, NSW Maritime (TBA).
- Lake Outing: 14-16th Nov (TBA).
- December:** - Christmas Party and 40th Anniversary 8th Dec.
- New Year's Eve 31st Dec
- January:** - Australia Day Cruise 26th Jan, 2026.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks this month to:

**Ross and Anne Shirtley; Richard Masson; Phil Cunningham; Tony Austin;
Steve and Natalie Meisenhelter.**

CRUISING DIVISION EDITOR

Any articles for the Cruiseletter can be sent to the Cruiseletter Editor, Ken Archer, preferably in MS Word format at archerken90@gmail.com (M: 0428 785 459) by 25th of each month.

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