



LAKE MACQUARIE YACHT CLUB CRUISING DIVISION



CRUISELETTER

JUNE 2026 | ISSUE NO. 431



Lord Howe Island from 2Dream

What's on this month

- **General Meeting: 15th June 2026, 7:00 pm; Pavillion.**
Guest Speaker: Damien Boldyrew
- **Outing: Saturday June 20th: Annual Soup Day.**

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Congratulations to Ralph and Angela for their award of the Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy.

SKIPPER'S REPORT

Greetings fellow CD members,

Well – winter has well and truly arrived! While there is much that needs to be done on Double Fun my motivation to 'brave the elements' is pretty low at present. I usually try to clean below the waterline myself but have recently engaged a pair of divers to do the job for me. Diver Akin (and Joshua) are well known to many of us and I can vouch for his energy and professionalism – the photos he took before he started were horrifying! I have never seen that much growth (mainly barnacles!) in the time that we have had the boat. He did an amazing job and my flatwater speed increased by nearly 2 knots after the clean. Akin has very kindly offered to be our guest speaker at the July general meeting so make sure you come along to hear his thoughts on how best to keep your hull clean and avoid premature (and expensive!) slipping.



TONY AUSTIN

The combined AGM/General meeting went well with a great presentation by Simon Turpin (LMYC Sailing Manager). He and the Board have really created a great program that is attracting people new to sailing and hopefully they will eventually become CD members. At the AGM we thanked Marion Cotterill for her efforts on the committee and welcomed Steve and Natalie Meisenhelter who have kindly volunteered to take over her position. Ralph, ably assisted by his motley crew, then regaled us with tales from their voyage to Lord Howe Island and back. It sounds like they had a fantastic time and the crew gained much invaluable experience in blue water sailing. The final event was the presentation of the Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy to Ralph and Angela for their outstanding efforts in promoting safe cruising throughout their time with the CD.

Our next meeting (Monday 15 June) will be a bit different. Our guest speaker will be Damien Boldyrew. Damien is a passionate local sailor who now travels the world as an Accredited World Sailing International Judge and Umpire. He will share some of his experiences with us and give us an opportunity to learn a bit about what goes on behind the scenes at the major international regattas.

Please don't forget our next on water event – the Annual Soup Day! This is a great opportunity to show off your culinary skills and mingle with friends. Details will be sent out closer to the day (20 June).

Finally, please check the LMYC Boat Register (accessible via the LMYC web site) to make sure that your boat is listed. This is the list that the Dock Master uses to confirm that you are entitled to overnight your boat alongside the marina. We think we have found 19 CD boats that are not on the register!

Best wishes and safe sailing,
Tony

May General Meeting and Annual General Meetings; 18th May 2026.

The meetings were well attended with 22 members present, and 9 apologies. The guest speaker at the General Meeting was Simon Turpin, LMYC Sailing Manager, who gave a presentation on the LMYC "**Discover Sailing Program**". The full details of the program can be accessed from the LMYC website at <https://www.lmyc.com.au/sc/>. In summary the program has a number of activities including: **Discover Sailing Experiences, Let's Go Sunday Racing, Friday Twilight Racing and Wednesday Afternoon Racing**. Also, **Family Sailing Adventures, Australian Sailing Start Crewing, Start Skippering and Start Racing Programs**. It also has a **SheSails social sailing program** as well as **OutThere Sailing** for 11-17 year olds, and a **Secondary School Sailing Program** as well as **Private Lessons**.

Ralph Asquith and his crew also gave an entertaining and instructive talk on their recent cruise to Lord Howe Island (see report p.11). Eleanor gave short **safety talk** on an innovative way to navigate between surrounding boats on other moorings at night, **by reversing out**. This made it much easier for the helmsman to locate and avoid other vessels.

The AGM followed the General Meeting. Skipper Tony presented his **Annual Report** (see next page), followed by the Treasurers report. As this was not an election year, the present Committee will continue for the next 12 months. There were some changes to the committee over the last year. The current Committee is Skipper, Tony Austin; Secretary Richard Masson; Treasurer, Ralph Asquith; Committee Members, Phil Cunningham, Eleanor Cunningham (LMYC Board Rep), Angela Asquith, Steve Meisenhelter, Natalie Meisenhelter, Mark Clement and Ken Archer (Cruiseletter Editor).

The final business of the meeting was the presentation of **Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy** to Ralph and Angela Asquith (see separate article page 6).



The meeting was well attended with 22 members present.



Ralph and his crew, Joe, Steve and Geoff, gave a presentation on their recent cruise to Lord Howe Island (see page 11).



Simon Turpin gave a presentation on the LMYC's "Discover Sailing Program". The Club's two Farr 25 yachts used in the program (right).



Lake Macquarie Yacht Club - Cruising Division

Annual Skipper's Report 2025-26

Introduction:

Welcome to the Lake Macquarie Yacht Club Cruising Division Annual Skipper's Report for the year 2025-26. This report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of our division's activities, achievements, challenges, and outlook.

Executive Summary: In 2025-26, the Cruising Division continued to thrive, fostering a vibrant community of cruising sailing enthusiasts on the beautiful waters of Lake Macquarie and beyond. 2025 was a major milestone for the CD – it was the 40th Anniversary of its formation!

Division Overview: The CD remains dedicated to promoting safe cruising and social sailing activities among its members. With a diverse range of vessels and skill levels, the CD offers something for everyone, from leisurely lake sailing to offshore cruising events.

Highlights and Achievements:

- Promoted our logo SAFE SOCIAL SAILING.
- Increased our membership and member participation rates.
- Successfully organized and hosted monthly on lake cruising events.
- Conducted an exciting, themed Pittwater Cruise hosted by 'Marko' and his 'Italian' family.
- Conducted an Ivan Irwin Lake Cruise with the novel theme of 'Eat the Lake'.
- Conducted a cruise to Port Hacking – a new location for the CD.
- In recognition of the 40th Anniversary of the CD the following events occurred:
 - Christmas Party – Outstanding display of historical photographs and publications
 - Introduction of a CD Sailing Shirt with unique CD design
 - Introduction of a new CD Pennant with a fresh and vibrant design
- Continued with safety training programs to ensure the well-being of our members and promote responsible sailing practices.

Membership and Participation:

Our division experienced an increase in membership throughout the year with ten new boats joining the fleet. Member participation in cruising events and social activities has increased leading to a strong sense of camaraderie and shared passion for sailing within our division. The committee continue to promote the division by:

- Contacting members who are not regularly participating in on-water events and inviting them to join in our activities.
- Introducing new, more adventurous, destinations to excite new members whilst maintaining our traditional on lake activities e.g. Port Hacking, Broughton Island, Lord Howe Island (a private cruise skippered by Ralph Asquith with 3 CD members as crew).

Financial Review:

The division maintained a stable financial position. Financial Resources were prudently managed to fund division activities, purchase and maintain equipment, and support community outreach efforts. A copy of the Financial Statements for the financial year ended 28th February 2026 is available to members. Many thanks to our Treasurer Ralph Asquith and our auditors Pacer Accountants who again provide their services free of cost.

Community Engagement and Support:

The Cruising Division actively supported the local community through donations to Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie, the Wangi Fireworks Committee and participation in Lakefest. Our division's presence and contributions were recognized and appreciated, further strengthening our ties with the broader sailing community and fostering a positive reputation for the Lake Macquarie Yacht Club.

Challenges and Opportunities:

The last year has been amazing as the channel has remained navigable for most of our members. With the promise of an 'enduring' solution to channel dredging we look forward to many more cruises outside the lake. Unfortunately, the cost of boat ownership is steadily climbing as DIY maintenance is no longer available on the lake, insurance premiums are rising and moorings becoming harder to get. Looking ahead, we recognize the opportunities for growth and innovation in expanding our sailing programs, attracting new members, and promoting sustainable practices within our division.

Future Goals and Objectives:

As we look to the future, the Cruising Division is committed to building upon our achievements and striving for excellence in all aspects of our operations. Our goals for the coming year include:

Expanding our cruising itinerary to explore new destinations and engage with other sailing clubs whilst maintaining regular monthly meetings and on lake events.

Enhancing member services and amenities to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all sailors.

Investing in training and development initiatives to empower members with the skills and knowledge to enjoy sailing safely and responsibly.

Conclusion:

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our CD committee, our members, and supporters for their dedication and contributions to the success of the Lake Macquarie Yacht Club Cruising Division. In particular, I would like to thank:

- Our Commodore Geoff Edman, the LMYC Board and staff for their ongoing support.
- Our hard working and ever diligent Secretary Richard Masson.
- Our Treasurer and Safety Officer, Ralph Asquith.
- Our LMYC Board representative Eleanor Cunningham.
- Ken Archer for his membership of the committee, his efforts in producing a superb photographic record of the CD for the Christmas party and his ongoing stellar efforts producing our Cruiseletter.
- Committee members: Angela Asquith (aka Raffles R Us), Phil Cunningham (aka Maître d' for Eat the Lake), Mark Clement (aka 'Marco') and Steve & Natalie Meisenhelter (replacing Marion Cotterill).
- Our meeting supper and raffle organisers.
- Chris Cahill for his excellent work as one of our Safety Officers.
- My wife Cath for her 'behind the scenes' support to myself and the CD.

Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones and created lasting memories on the water. I look forward to another year of adventure, camaraderie, and shared passion for sailing.

Tony Austin
Skipper
LMYC Cruising Division

Citation for the Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy – 2026.

Ralph & Angela Asquith

“2Dream”

The Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy is awarded to members of the Cruising Division for one, or a number, of the following achievements:

- Outstanding cruising endurance and/or seamanship
- Providing selfless assistance to others during a cruise
- Promotion and facilitation of cruising and/or inspiring the confidence, competence and enjoyment of fellow cruisers.

The CD Skipper and Committee are delighted to award the Trophy to Ralph and Angela Asquith (2Dream) for their outstanding efforts in support of the CD.

Outstanding cruising endurance and/or seamanship.

Ralph has a unique background in so far as he comes from a family of professional fishermen where he grew up around boats and spent much of his time on the water. He then went on to develop a deep passion for recreational sailing culminating in his purchase of a cruising catamaran (2Dream) in the Caribbean. Ralph then sailed that vessel safely back to Australia overcoming a wide range of challenges that just added to his already extensive range of knowledge, skills and experience. Since then Ralph has undertaken many long voyages in *2Dream* and clearly demonstrated his excellent cruising seamanship and ability to meld his crew into an effective, safe and mutually supportive team.

Promotion and facilitation of cruising and/or inspiring the confidence, competence and enjoyment of fellow cruisers.

Ralph is always willing to share his knowledge and does so in a humble and engaging manner. He makes those less experienced than himself feel empowered to extend themselves in the knowledge that he knows what he is talking about. Ralph has given many presentations to the CD on topics based on personal experience that enhance boating safety. Ralph and Angela are always the first to volunteer when anyone needs assistance regardless of the task. For these reasons Ralph and Angela are held in the very highest regard by their fellow CD members. (continued next page).



Skipper Tony presenting the Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy to Ralph and Angela from 2Dream.

Since joining the CD Ralph and Angela have actively worked to extend the sailing opportunities for CD members. Not only have they organised many on water activities but they have sought to encourage members to explore new cruising grounds both on and around the lake. Broughton Island is very close to Ralph's heart as are the less often visited parts of the Port Stephens region. By leading trips to these destinations, he has certainly expanded the CD cruising options. Ralph also organised our first formal cruise to Port Hacking where he made many useful contacts. By encouraging less confident members to visit these locations under his watchful eye he is building a cadre of future cruise leaders.

More recently Ralph organised a private cruise to Lord Howe Island and two of the outer reefs to the north. He invited three fellow CD members to join him on 2Dream. This was a unique experience as the voyage to Lord Howe is notorious for fickle weather, strong currents, and rough seas. The trip was an exciting challenge for his crew and gave them a fantastic opportunity to gain the experience and confidence needed to safely undertake similar 'blue water' passages. His crew members can now share their experiences to facilitate a growth in confidence, competence, and enjoyment amongst their fellow cruisers.

In conclusion, Ralph, ably assisted and supported by Angela, has clearly met and generously exceeded the criteria for the award of the Jack Hitchcock Memorial Trophy. He has greatly extended the cruising horizons for many CD members. His quiet confidence, positive attitude and careful attention to safety and preparation provide an excellent role model for all CD members.

May 2026

Safety Snippet

Safety Issues when climbing a mast

Climbing a yacht's mast can be done safely, but the risks are significant because you are combining heights on a moving platform supported by ropes and mechanical devices which are potentially defective.

Recommended setup:

- Use a fully supported Bosun's chair for comfort and stability.
- Use a climbing harness in case of failure of the primary lifting devices.
- Use a primary halyard for lifting attached to the bosun's chair.
- Use a second, independent safety halyard, with fall-arrest device such as a halyard jammer.
- Use of 'talking hat' communicators can be game changing as it makes communications 100% reliable.
- Attach main halyard to an appropriate serviceable winch. Ensure any powered device used for winching is reliable and appropriate for the job in lieu of a manual handle.
- Rig a method of moving tools, parts etc up to the person at the top of the mast. This should be a sealable bag rather than a bucket which can snag and become inverted while being hoisted/lowered.

- Have two competent crew on deck. One of the deck support crew should have a defined role of monitoring the person up the mast with 100% visual contact, standing well clear of the danger zone below the mast (falling tools etc). The other person stays with the winches.
- When lowering the person, one deck support person should be assigned to each halyard.

Before climbing: Inspect halyards and shackles, check winch condition, wear helmet and gloves, use climbing harness and bosun's chair together, secure tools and brief crew.

Biggest hazards are falls, equipment failure and sudden boat movement. The main risk factors causing falls are: harness failure or incorrect fit, shackle/carabiner opening accidentally, losing grip or footing, rope or halyard failure, fatigue while ascending and sudden mast swing or boat wake. Even a short fall can cause severe injury because of contact with spreaders, winches, deck hardware, or the boom.

Other issues to consider are boat movement: wake from passing boats can throw you sideways, wind gusts can cause mast oscillation, waves create unpredictable motion under sail and rig loads change constantly. Climbing underway is substantially riskier than climbing at a dock, and not recommended unless essential. Safest when: at dock or calm anchorage, low wind, minimal wake and dry mast and deck.

Gear failure can be caused by: old halyards with UV damage, worn sheaves at masthead, incorrect knots, corroded shackles, winch slippage and harness not designed for vertical work. A bosun's chair alone is not ideal protection, a climbing harness with redundancy is safer.

One halyard, one winch, or one attachment point is dangerous. Best practice is to use two independent halyards, one primary lifting line and one separate safety backup line on a separate winch or jammer.

Human mistakes are common, including: tail released accidentally, poor communication, incorrect belaying, crew distracted or inexperienced and fingers caught in self-tailing winches. Use clear commands: "Up", "Stop", "Down" and "Slack". Only one person should control each halyard winch/jammer.

Beware of Suspension trauma. If left hanging motionless in a harness after a fall, blood pools in the legs and loss of consciousness can occur within minutes. Always have a rescue plan, knife accessible and crew capable of lowering you immediately.

Be mindful of tool hazards. Dropped objects are a major issue. Tools falling from height can seriously injure crew and loose hardware can damage deck or waterline. Use tool lanyards, sealable tool bags, and ensure a clear exclusion zone on deck below.

(See pictures next page).



Tony climbing his mast on “Double Fun” to fix a radar reflector. Ken and Cath are handling the two halyards on the deck below. One halyard (the red one) is the mainsail halyard, the other white safety halyard is the spinnaker halyard. Note the sealable tool bag hanging off the bosun’s chair.

CD Merchandise for Sale:

The CD has some “MUST HAVE” items for your Club boating needs so avail yourselves of these most desirable items while stocks last!



**CD Shirts: \$30
or 2 for \$50.**



CD Pennants \$10.



**We still have a few 2026
calendars for sale, now at
a reduced price of \$5.**

For the purchase of any items, contact our Treasurer Ralph. Shirts can now be purchased at the LMYC club front desk, and all items are available at Club Meetings. You can now also pay using your Credit or Debit cards.

Personalise your shirts: If you would like to put your boat’s name or some other insignia on your shirts, Ralph can also provide details as to where this can be done.

Lake Matters

The LMCC Aquatic Services Committee meeting was held on Thursday 21 May. It was well attended by representatives from Maritime, and it was pretty much all 'Good News'. Stage 4 of the Swansea Channel dredging was going well and should be finished by the time you read this. The new dredge and sand transfer system are being moved down to the lake and will be assembled and tested prior to setting up at the Naru Point work area. Once the acceptance testing has been completed the system will be formally handed over to MIDO/Maritime and work will continue towards achieving a channel that is 60m wide and 3m deep. Once this is achieved the dredge may be transferred to other NSW sites but Swansea Channel will always have priority.

Council is looking at the public jetties on the lake after the unexpected closure (on safety grounds) of three older jetties in the southern area of the lake (Bonnell's Bay, Brightwaters and more recently Coal Point). Members of the ASC were invited to join Council staff on the site inspections which led to lots of discussion about the roles, locations and design of replacement jetties.

On Friday 22 May the Hunter Moorings Special Interest Group (made up from the Commodores of the major sailing clubs on Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens) had a meeting with the Chief of Staff to Minister Jenny Aitchison (Minister for Roads & Regional Transport which includes Maritime). I represented Geoff Edman and we presented our concerns about the current mooring situation which has resulted in a severe shortage of moorings across the region. Three senior officials from Maritime participated in the meeting and were able to share all of our concerns about what has become an enormously complex multi-agency process. It was agreed that the process did need to be streamlined and we look forward to seeing the development of the NSW Mooring Action Plan. This development will include a period of public consultation so please share your thoughts and experiences with me so we can best present our case.

Tony

Whats Happening at LMYC

For all the information on LMYC activities go to the LMYC website and open the latest "Forecast" newsletter, or by clicking on this link:

[Forecast](#)

Some of the activities include:

- Recent Presentation night with winners including David Kelty ("Mirage"), Noel Jenkins ("Fathom") and Steve Liddell ("Squid"). The Champion Lady Sailor winner of the Ian Thorold Memorial Trophy is Jo Gomboso ("Konan The Bavarian").
- In the Rear Commodore's Report, there is also a very interesting article on fire extinguishers on boats.
- The car park repairs are now completed.
- There is lots of live music on Friday nights and Sundays and Joker Card draw on Thursday nights.
- If you open the email circulating the "Forecast" newsletter there is a link to a sailing rules game you might be interested in looking at. The link is also given below:

[Link to sailing rules game](#)

LORD HOWE ISLAND CRUISE

Geoff Allen

In April 2026, Ralph Asquith, Steve Meisenhelter, Joe Ellam and I sailed 2Dream, Ralph's Leopard 40 Catamaran (pictured right), out to Lord Howe Island and back. The trip can be summarised as big swell, big wind, lots of big fish and great company. The trip was 1,020nm in total which took 139 hrs of sailing over 14 days, with an average speed of 7.3kts including stopping to pull in fish, sail changes and anchoring.

There is an old saying that "Fair weather never made a good sailor" well Ralph, the Skipper, was already a great sailor, but it is true to say that the crew have returned much better sailors.

With provisioning thoughtfully provided by Ralph and Angela, all the boat checks done and the crew briefed, we headed off on Saturday, 18th April 2026 and got the leisurely 9 am bridge and headed to Port Stephens. With a 15kt southerly blowing and a southerly swell of 1-2 meters, we hoisted the main, dusted off 2Dream's spinnaker and had an enjoyable sail up to Port Stephens arriving and anchoring in Shoal Bay at about 3:30pm. It was then into the Country Club for dinner and a couple of beers before returning to the boat.

Next morning, being Sunday, was bacon and eggs day which the Skipper promptly cooked up and the crew demolished. It was then back to shore for a walk up mount Tomaree and around the Fort Tomaree battlements and torpedo launcher. We then took 2Dream down to Nelson Bay for some last-minute provisioning (fishing gear, beer and chocolate!) before heading off to Broughton Island where we picked up the mooring at Providence Beach. We spent a few hours exploring Broughton Island and dodging mutton bird nests. It was then time for Joe to express his culinary skills in the 2Dream kitchen cooking up beef stroganoff which went down a treat.



Up early on 20th April 2026, we headed off about 6:45am east northeast for Balls Pyramid about 370nm away, the wind was forecast to be southerly around 20kts with a southerly swell of 2-3m. We headed off with one reef in the main and full Genoa, and we were making good speed 7-8 kts but had the current against us.

In the afternoon the wind increased to 25kts plus and we put a second reef in the main and reefed the Genoa. The swell increased to 4-5 metres with the occasional 6 metre swell and 35kts gusts of wind. We rocketed along at about 9-10kts with 1-2kts of current against us, reaching a max speed of 15.5kts at one time. In these conditions all the crew, except for the skipper, became seasick, some for the first time ever. So much for hardened sailors!! Ralph cooked up his famous spaghetti bolognaise on the first night, which, now the crew were getting their sea-legs, tasted great on the way down, but not so great on the way up an hour or two later!



On a broad reach there was a lot of water coming over the boat and we were making good speed, but the boat handled it well and it never felt unsafe. Some dripping water leaks from three of the hatches meant some of the crew slept in wet beds on the first couple of nights until the leaks could be taped up. Thank God for duct tape!!

To keep the batteries topped up we were running a motor for a while every few hours until, unfortunately, the port motor would not start, so we left it until we arrived at Balls Pyramid about 6:30 am on 22nd April 2026. Sheltering in the lee of the pyramid we found that the port motor had sea water in the oil. We sucked the water and oil out of the motor and put new oil in, but the motor was hydro locked so we left it until Lord Howe Island and proceeded with one motor. Thanking our lucky stars that cats have two motors!!

We arrived at Lord Howe about 1:30pm and under the direction from the Senior Constable we were allowed to enter the Lagoon and pick up a prearranged mooring. The Biosecurity team then arrived and boarded 2Dream to check that we didn't bring any rodents with us and that we had the necessary baits and traps set. We then set about drying the wet beds.

The next morning, we started pulling the injectors out on the port motor, but ran into trouble getting one of them out, so we went ashore in search of a mechanic. We were walking down the road looking for the Administration building to ask them about finding a mechanic, when Ralph, as he does, stops a truck to ask for directions and finds that the driver, Flynn, is the Island's mechanic and that he can come out and look at the motor that afternoon (Ralph should buy lottery tickets!). That afternoon Flynn came out to the boat in the pouring rain, got the injector out and was able to clean out the water and get the motor running again. And just to make sure that there was nothing wrapped around the props, Flynn stripped off and jumped in the water and checked the props. What a great young feller, 24, running his own business and going the extra yards.



We are not sure how the water got into the motor, Flynn believes that it has to do with the raw water either syphoning into the exhaust or that the propeller continued to turn while in gear and the raw water pump filled the exhaust up.

Despite the windy and wet weather, we spent the next three days exploring the Island which has many fantastic scenic trails, doing some souvenir shopping, coffee, bacon and egg rolls and of course a couple of beers. On 25th April 2026, we attended the ANZAC service at the Lord Howe remembrance memorial, then off to the Services Club for a beer.



As cruisers we had access to the free toilets, showers and laundry on the Jetty. We were able to top up our water which is filtered rainwater including a UV filter, have long hot showers and catch up on our washing.

Our next destination was Elizabeth Reef, part of the Lord Howe Marine Park, which lies approximately 90nm north of Lord Howe Island. To arrive in the morning, we headed off at 4pm on 26th April 2026 and sailed overnight. The wind was easterly around 17-23kts and the swell was easterly around 2m. We raised the main with two reefs and set the full Genoa. We made good time sailing at 6-8kts, despite having to stop several times to pull in fish. We caught several big Kingfish and we lost a number of lures to what must have been huge Marlin or Tuna (that's my story). Arriving in the early morning we anchored in the lee of the reef near one the cays.

The size and the colours of the reef are amazing, out in the middle of nowhere and no one around for 100's of kms. It is easy to see how so many boats are wrecked on the reef, as you're sailing along in the deep blue water and all of a sudden there are breaking waves, aqua water and coral. At low tide there are coral cays, but nothing at high tide. The sea life was prolific. Our resident diver Joe went down to check the fish and coral and to make sure the anchor was alright, he came back raving about the sea life.

Much to the excitement of our resident surveyor Steve, what looked like an abandoned BBQ on the Cay, was actually a Doppler Satellite Station (surveyor mark) that was used to measure the movement of the Australian continent in times gone past. Did you know that the continent is moving northwest at 10cm per annum? That is one metre every ten years!!

Some hand line fishing off the dinghy produced several Trevally and some tropical Snapper. You had to be quick to pull them in or the shiver of sharks made short work of the fish and took your hook and sinker.

On 29th April 2026 at about 9am, after some last-minute fishing, we headed off to Middleton Reef which is about 30nm north of Elizabeth reef. With two reefs in the main and full genoa we arrived at about 2pm and anchored in the sound behind a coral cay.

Middleton is a massive reef with lots of wrecks and is shaped like a kidney with a sound in the middle and a number of coral cays. It is also part of the Lord Howe Marine Park and no fishing is allowed. Diver Joe suited up and we dropped him in on a reef for an explore. We were going to go for a snorkel, but the number of inquisitive sharks kept us in the dry. Joe tells us that the coral and the fish life was fantastic, we just took his word for that.



Steve and Ralph on 2Dream sailing past the impressive Balls Pyramid about 20 nm from Lord Howe.



2Dream "flying" under its spinnaker.

On 30th April 2026 at about 6:45am we headed southwest towards Lake Macquarie. We had planned to sail to Coff Harbour, however with the forecast wind being easterly 17-24kts moving around to be northerly 17-24kts over the next couple of days we decided to head straight for Lake Macquarie. The wind was true to forecast, and the swell was from the east 1.5 to 2.5 m. With 1-2kts of current with us, two reefs in the main and the full Genoa, we managed to average 8kts for the trip back. The sail back was great, we even managed to catch a few Mahi Mahi on the way arriving on 2nd May 2026 just in time for the 3pm bridge at Swansea. It was then off to LMYC to unload and clean 2Dream.

Overall, it was an amazing trip and adventure. I would like to thank my fellow crew for making the trip so enjoyable, we had a lot of laughs and pulled together well as a crew. I would especially like to thank Ralph for making the trip possible and sharing his blue water sailing experience so freely, and thanks to Angela for her assistance with provisioning and holding the fort while Ralph was away. I have learned so much on this trip and enjoyed the camaraderie immensely.

Geoff Allen



The Crew (L-R): Steve, Geoff, Joe and Skipper Ralph on a hike at Lord Howe Island. Other photos in this article show the many fish being caught, cooked and consumed!



Monthly Lake Outing 15-17 May

This month's outing was reorganised at short notice due to the cancellation of the original plan to sail to Port Stephens and Broughton Island on the previous weekend, 8-11th May, lead by Ralph and Angela. This was cancelled due to poor weather conditions. Ralph rescheduled the outing for the following weekend, to meet at Taylors Bay on the Friday afternoon for sundowners. On Saturday, some members played tennis at the School Recreation Centre, while others hiked out to Point Wolstoncroft. This was followed by lunch at the Gwandalan Bowling Club. After lunch, the remaining boats went across to Browns Bay for the evening, and enjoyed sundowners on Double Fun. The cruise finished with vessels returning home on Sunday morning.

Seven vessels attended all or part of the outing, including *2Dream*, *Rio*, *Double Fun*, *Migaloo*, *Moondance*, *Renaissance* and *Tenacious*. Graeme and Linda joined the group for Saturday lunch.



Sundowners aboard 2Dream on Friday afternoon.



Early morning sunlight in Taylors Bay.



The end of Point Wolstoncroft is a 2.8 km hike from the fitness camp.



Some of our fleet anchored at Taylors Bay.



Coffee at the fitness camp dining hall (left) and at lunch at the Gwandalan Bowlo (right).



Tennis anyone?



Can't resist a nice sunset! This was at Browns Bay on Saturday evening.

Contact Details

Executives:

Skipper: Tony Austin 0416 266 947
Secretary: Richard Masson 0422 347 875
Treasurer: Ralph Asquith 0409 318 230

Committee:

Eleanor Cunningham (LMYC Board Rep) 0416 258 461
Phil Cunningham 0416 078 461
Ken Archer (Cruiseletter Editor) 0428 785 459
Angela Asquith 0408 479 228
Mark Clement 0400 716 756
Steve Meisenhelter..... 0413 368 232
Natalie Meisenhelter..... 0410 649 543



Long distance shot of the dredge in the channel.

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

JUNE:

15th: General Meeting in the Pavillion. Guest Speaker: Damien Boldyrew, International Sailing Judge and Umpire.

20th: Outing: Annual Soup Day Outing: Coordinators: Angela and Ralph; Location TBA.

JULY:

13th: General Meeting. Guest Speaker: Akin Donmez, Ala Dive Services.

17th: Outing: Duck Hole firepit TBC.

AUGUST:

10th: General Meeting: Guest Speaker TBA.

15th: Outing: Ferry, Nelsons Bay to Tea Gardens and Lunch TBC.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks this month to Geoff Allen for his report on the Lord Howe Island cruise; Ralph and Angela for running the weekend outing.

CRUISELETTER 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.

Please address all letters for the Cruising Division to:

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