

April 2018



SisterShip

women on the water

\$4.50 Australia



Bumper Issue!

Penang - Pearl of the Orient

Glorious Îles Glorieuses

MY PERFECT DINGHY

Cruising for Critters - a sailing vet

PLUS Boatschooling, Downsizing for Cruising,

Paddling Alaska, Barge Boats, Pearls of Wisdom...

And much more!

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**Postal Address: 59 Bellemount Lane,
Brogo, NSW 2550, Australia.**

www.sistershipmagazine.com

**Email: editor@sistershipmagazine.com
advertising@sistershipmagazine.com**

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Have you ever wanted to be a 'page 3' girl? No, neither have we. In celebration (and reality) of women on the water - show us what REAL women on the water look like.

Your 'glamorous' editors are taking the first turn!



ABOVE: Jackie cleaning behind the stove aboard *Pyewacket II* and **LEFT:** busy antifouling *Mariah II* in Demopolis, Alabama, USA.



LEFT: Shelley removing old lifelines aboard *Orac* and **BELOW:** changing a joker valve in the marine head.



Send your 'Page 3' photos to
editor@sistershipmagazine.com

The bowsprit

Thirty years ago, an intrepid woman sailor by the name of Ruth Boydell launched the world's first magazine for women on the water, *SisterShip*. After many years in 'drydock', back copies of the original *SisterShip* were given as gifts by Ruth to attendees at the inaugural Women Who Sail Australia Gathering on the Bay (a weekend conference for women boaters) at Port Stephens, Australia. As lovers of writing and the ocean, *SisterShip* enthralled us, the stories as interesting and relevant now as they were all those years ago. The seed was planted – we wanted to revive this gem.

There are many sailing magazines out there. Why revive *SisterShip*? The rise of the global Women Who Sail movement (and the many women's boating sub groups) highlights not only that the need for such a vessel still exists but also the unique bond between those of us connected by the 'big blue'. *SisterShip* is not just for sailors, we are for women on (and in!) the water. Kayakers, surfers, divers, barge boaters, sailboarders, those working to protect our marine environment, *SisterShip* is for all of us.

As Ruth stated in the very first issue of *SisterShip* all those years ago, this is *your* opportunity to join the crew navigating *SisterShip*'s course. We invite women who are on the water in any way to be part of our network. Send us your stories, photos, and artwork. We welcome submissions on any topic relevant to women on, and around, the water. Contact us with your ideas and we can send you our guidelines (also on website).

For now, pull up a chair or a sail bag, find a patch of soft sand under a shady palm or a sunny corner out of the wind, and enjoy the first of our marine offerings as we introduce you to some of the women who will be writing for us on a regular basis. Feast your eyes on the delights of Îles Glorieuses, join our sailing vet, head to South East Asia, have a chuckle at our *SisterShip* 'toon, be inspired by two young 'passage adventurers' and much, much more.

With Ruth's blessing we are delighted to welcome you aboard as *SisterShip* is refloated and we begin our journey...

Shelley Wright

Jackie Parry





message in a bottle

Send your letters to
editor@sistershipmagazine.com

Dear Jackie and Shelley,

Good luck with your magazine *SisterShip*! There are many boating magazines targeted mainly at men so it is about time one was specifically for women. I look forward to reading your articles and letters with interest and trust you will not have advertisers using scantily clad men as some of the other mags have portrayed women!

All the best,

Kay Cottee

First woman to sail solo, non-stop and unassisted around the world.

I wish you both well in the launch of 'Sistership'. If it does anything like as well as the 'Women Who Sail' website(s) you'll have confirmed just how much interest there is out there in sailing women supporting each other and encouraging their endeavours. Sailing, in all its aspects, is just as much a female world of enjoyment as a male world - so good luck to you!

Jeanne Socrates

Single-handed sailor, circumnavigator - twice around Cape Horn, three times around the globe.

It excites me to see so many women entering the realm of sailing, not just as partners on their husband's or boyfriend's boats, but as skippers, captains, and successful racers. I hope *SisterShip* helps bring even more women of all ages out onto the water. Best of luck with this new endeavour.

Lin Pardey

The world's most recognised cruising sailor (with Larry).

"Go simple, go small, go now!"



Welcome *SisterShip*! And congratulations to the team behind this great initiative. It's fantastic to see the way that nautical women like to support each other and I'm sure that *SisterShip* will be a fascinating and fantastic platform to facilitate that support. Fair winds and happy sailing!

Jessica Watson

Youngest person to sail solo, non-stop around the world.

We wish you the best of luck with *SisterShip* and all who sail in her. It will add another thread to the rich tapestry of the boating world. I hope you gain as much satisfaction and enjoyment from the publication (and the interesting characters you'll encounter) as we do with *AFLOAT*.

Fair winds,

The AFLOAT Team

AFLOAT Magazine.

What a great idea. *SisterShip* Magazine, bringing so many amazing women in sailing around the world together. Good luck with your launch.

Tracy Edwards MBE

Founder of The Maiden Factor.



Dear Shelley and Jackie,

I am delighted to hear that you are re-launching the *SisterShip* Magazine! I have met so many amazing women sailors since joining the Women Who Sail groups and learnt so much. To now have a magazine run by women, written by women, aimed at women is so exciting and long overdue. I can't wait to read it and, maybe, I'll even be brave enough to contribute!

Wishing you good luck and, of course, fair winds and calm seas!

Jane Jarratt

Founder Women Who Sail the Med.

The lifestyle of yacht cruising has always been at its best when it is an equal opportunity employer. Think Pardeys, Binders, Hiscocks and untold more.

There are not many other sports or recreations where the male and female must be able to perform any job or need to work together as a team. Especially when stuck in the middle of the ocean with a loose flapping headsail, or crossing a notorious bar entrance.

Sure, most yachts tend to slowly separate jobs, chores and duties down more historical lines, but this is mostly due to necessity and interest than due to some intrinsic sexism. Why, then, does our chosen way to spend our leisure time need a special magazine for women? Be blown if I know I'm a bloke! But the female mariner has always had a pioneering spirit, by desire not by design, breaking glass ceilings as they go (but never glass hatches).

Whether it be picking up the slack whenever it is required; or learning new skills to make the onboard life more equitable, women sailors have for centuries worked alongside what has been traditionally a male domain: learning, helping, doing. Men do not need their own sailing magazine because every magazine is already geared to their reading enjoyment.

I see, therefore, *SisterShip* not as a magazine for women per se, but a magazine for the best mate.

Cruising Helmsman welcomes *SisterShip* to the fold and looks forward to many future collaborations, cruises and maybe even a few sundowners.

Phil Ross

Editor Cruising Helmsman Magazine.

Congratulations on your launch! When I first started writing for sailing magazines, editors encouraged me not to focus on my feelings - because men didn't want to read about feelings, they wanted to read substance. Those editors were under the impression women didn't read boating magazines, didn't want to know more about boating and they assumed we were along as passengers or crew. It turns out women do captain our own boats and we do like to read about feelings (as well as about much more substantive things like destinations, mechanical skills and environmental issues). But mainstream male-oriented media hasn't caught up yet and because of this many important stories never get told. I look forward to hearing what women from all walks of life have to say about our sport - there's so much we can learn from each other and there's so much to celebrate. Good luck going forward. And thanks for including new voices in our conversation about boating.

Best wishes,

Diane Selkirk

Circumnavigator & Writer.

A magazine about women on the water? I am cheering this on! As the founder of Women Who Sail, a group that continues to grow exponentially since its inception in 2011, I can attest to the need (and demand) for this type of magazine for women and non-binary sailors around the globe. *SisterShip*, I wish you wild success!

Charlotte Kaufman

s/v Rebel Heart, Founder Women Who Sail.

Dear *Sistership*,

I wanted to wish you and your amazing team of women a huge success for your re-launch of the *Sistership* Magazine. It is so heart-warming to see a magazine written by female sailors and supporting female sailors and I feel proud to be apart of your journey. I will be an avid reader and love the encouragement and support that your magazine offers to women on the water. As the only women-focused sailing magazine out there you should all be standing proud of the positive work that you will undertake. I am sure that with your inspiring and encouraging words there will be more women taking up the adventurous sport of sailing. Best of luck for your future editions.

Lisa Blair

First woman to sail solo around Antarctica.



Lisa Blair (photo credit Dean Coopman)

I would like to wish Jackie and Shelley the greatest success in their venture into magazine publication and the relaunch of *SisterShip Magazine*.

Carole Erdman-Grant

Founder of Women on Barges (WOBs).

Dear Shelley and Jackie,

I am extremely thrilled *SisterShip* has two new capable and very talented co-skippers to launch her once again into adventure. I know you will inspire, encourage, rejoice, occasionally commiserate, and reflect on all the wonderful ways women are sailing, seafaring, subsea-faring and simply exploring the shallows! May you sail long and far together with your multiskilled crews and passengers. This is the *SisterShip* I imagined!

Ruth Boydell,

Founder SisterShip Magazine.

Dear *Sistership* Magazine,

On behalf of the Women Who Sail New Zealand Group I would like to wish you huge congratulations for the 're-launch' of *Sistership* Magazine. Sailing really is a sport for life, it is diverse and means different things for so many people. Whether you are a racer or a cruiser, a weekend sailor or a liveaboard, it can be a career, a hobby, a sport or a lifestyle, and we love to see lots of women out on the water enjoying themselves. We are really looking forward to reading the first issue and believe that the magazine will be a fantastic way of supporting and informing existing sailors and encouraging more women to get involved in sailing.

All our very best wishes.

Viki Moore & Gill Durham

Women Who Sail New Zealand.



Good luck, Jackie and Shelley, as you set sail on your new venture. From my many years editing Cruising Helmsman magazine, I know all too well the challenges facing females on the water and a publication like *SisterShip* catering specifically for women is a great idea. It will help educate, inform and entertain. And yes, it is needed. Last year I did a survey of female day-sailors for a boating magazine I write for and there was still a huge lack of skills and knowledge when it came to taking charge without warning. That said, I'm sure many a male will still be stealing a quick look when they get the chance, as a good read is always a good read and with Jackie and Shelley at the helm, *SisterShip* will definitely be that. Bon voyage, ladies. Wishing fair winds your way.

Caroline Strainig

Former Editor Cruising Helmsman.

Women who sail are a diverse bunch. Some of us race; some of us prefer the slow, meandering of a cruising life. Some of us liveaboard full time while others save every penny and hour of annual leave to visit our boats as often as we can. Some have been sailors all our lives, and some of us are still learning the ropes and chasing our dreams. Some sail solo, some with a whole tribe for crew. We are mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sisters, wives and friends. But the thing we share is our need for community - a sense of belonging and connection with people that understand the unique joys and challenges of being a woman on the water. From all the members of the Women Who Sail Australia group, thank you *SisterShip* for reflecting and being a voice for our amazing community, and we wish you smooth seas, following winds and every success for the voyage ahead!

Caitlin Harris

Women Who Sail Australia.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a bright yellow sailing jacket with a red life vest, is shown from the chest up. She is looking slightly to the right with a determined expression. She is on a boat, with the Australian flag (blue with white stars and red and white stripes) visible in the background. The image has a high-contrast, graphic style with bold colors and sharp lines. A yellow banner is at the top, and a red banner is at the bottom right.

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Passage Adventures



The calm before the storm — Mathilde crossing to Stradbroke Island, Queensland

Keen to combine their passion for adventure with their love of the environment, young Australian women **LUCY GRAHAM** and **MATHILDE GORDON** write about their plan to kayak 2,103 kilometres from Juneau, Alaska, to Port Renfrew, Vancouver Island.

It is hard to believe that it is now 2018 and we can say that our epic adventure will begin THIS year! It has been two years in planning so far; raising money, getting support, planning public talks, meeting inspirational people, bringing organisations together and so much more. While the expedition will definitely be the highlight, the planning has been just as exciting. We have made incredible international connections and opened more doors than we could have imagined. Now we are ready to leap into the next stage.

Our adventure will see us kayak 2,103 kilometres from Juneau, Alaska, to Port Renfrew, Vancouver Island. When we tell people this, we usually get wide-eyed shock and excitement, followed by a frown, some confusion and A LOT of questions. The following is a summary of our answers to some of the most commonly asked questions.

Why?

Why not? Adventure is one of the most exciting and fulfilling endeavours you can put your time to. On one level, we are doing this because the prospect of three months in nature, away from the hustle of everyday life, sounds like a dream. To share each day with incredible animals, be immersed in unfamiliar territory, and to experience the power of the ocean, is our perfect getaway. However, as we are both passionate environmentalists and activists, we knew we had the opportunity to make this trip meaningful. For that reason, we are using the paddle to talk about two

important things close to our hearts; women in adventure and marine debris.

“By 2050 it is predicted that there will be more weight in plastic than fish in our oceans.”



Women and girls have been under-represented in adventure sports all over the world. In Australia, we are starting to see this change through events like the nation's first

ABOVE: Lucy landing on Moreton Island after a 16 km crossing.

RIGHT: Bags of marine debris collected by the Tangaroa Blue Foundation.

BELOW: Mathilde cleaning up marine debris at Chilli Beach, Far North Queensland.

Women's Adventure Film Tour last year, organisations such as She Went Wild, Wild Women on Top, and Women Who Sail Australia, and magazines such as *SisterShip*. Through our paddle and messaging, we are contributing to this shift in mentality. And helping to overcome the barriers that women face in exploring the outdoors by inspiring them to follow their passions.

Marine debris is man-made pollution that ends up in our oceans, through littering or dumping. It is a global issue that is affecting ocean ecosystems and coastal habitats in a serious way. Litter in our oceans causes injuries and kills marine wildlife, and also poses a risk to human health. It's hard to imagine that every single piece of plastic ever created still exists on our planet, and by 2050 it is predicted that there will be more weight in plastic than fish in our oceans*. We, as stewards of this world, have a responsibility to change this reality. Having grown up next to the Great Barrier Reef and beautiful oceans, this issue is particularly close to our



hearts. We are using the expedition as a catalyst to talk about marine debris and raise \$20,000 for The Tangaroa Blue Foundation and the Living Oceans Society. These organisations run beach clean-ups and work on stopping the rubbish at the source. You can see so much more on our website about the impact of marine debris and the work that these two organisations are doing to combat it.

“Our biggest concern will be camping around bears, a new concept for us.”

Have you done something like this before?

No, never. This will be totally outside the realm of anything that either of us have done before. However, that is the point. If we only ever did what we had done before, nothing new would ever happen! Adventure is about challenge, about trying to do something you are not sure if you can achieve, then pushing yourself to the limits to make it happen! We have had so much assistance, guidance and

training that we are sure we are in the best place to succeed.

Will you have a support boat?

No, we are doing the entire expedition unsupported. We will have a spot tracker with us, amongst other emergency equipment. The spot tracker will be sending out our location each day. We will carry a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) and satellite phone too. All of this will be registered with key people who will ensure, that if we do get into trouble, help will soon be on its way. We want to face the challenges, and enjoy the calm moments in solitude, knowing that we can rely on ourselves and our ability to overcome problems.

Where will you sleep? Will you be sleeping in your kayaks on the ocean?

No, we are definitely not going to be sleeping in our kayaks. We will be camping every night, we have researched blogs, read books and trawled through Google Earth™ to find suitable sites along the route, from sandy beaches to rocky ledges to the occasional,

Lucy and Mathilde training on Wivenhoe Dam, Queensland.



inviting, wooden hut. Our biggest concern will be camping around bears, a new concept for us, as everything in Australia that can kill you is much smaller than the average human (crocodiles excluded). However, after researching and listening to advice from fellow kayakers on the other side of the world, we are feeling much more confident about being in the presence of these beautiful animals. Check out our website to see our route, and follow us on social media where you can see our progress throughout the journey.

What are you going to eat?

We are adding an extra layer of challenge by doing the entire expedition single-use-plastic free. We want to show people that if we can do a three-month paddle through the wilderness without the 'convenience' of single-use plastic, then those at home can do



Lucy cleaning marine debris from the Brisbane River.

the same. We are fortunate to have the support of a social enterprise in Vancouver called the Lupii Cafe. The Cafe is waste free, it uses quality food that doesn't make it to supermarket shelves, and they host great

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Bill Parlane, Editor PassageMaker Magazine (USA)

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Steve Doshew, of Doshew Offshore & SetSail (USA)

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community events too. Definitely check them out.

While many other paddlers can just stop in at towns along the way, we won't have that option. We will be preparing three months of food for the trip, storing it in layers of dry bags, and sending it to six resupply points along the way. We can carry two weeks of food at a time in our hatches. These meals will mostly be dehydrated, with some fresh fruit and vegetables at the start of each resupply. Don't worry, there will be chocolate in every batch!

*** Ellen MacArthur Foundation**

Lucy Graham and Mathilde Gordon met at university in 2013 through a shared passion for the environment and adventure. Lucy has a Certificate IV in Outdoor Recreation and a Bachelor of Sustainability. Mathilde studied ecology and zoology at university which lead to a career in conservation. Lucy and Mathilde undertake rock climbing, skydiving, snorkeling and scuba diving in addition to their kayaking and camping adventures.

Check out these links to follow their journey and donate to Tangaroa Blue Foundation and the Living Oceans Society:

Website: <https://passageadventures.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/passageadventures/>

Chuffed Fundraising: <https://chuffed.org/project/paddling-for-a-cleaner-ocean>

Those are just a few of the questions we are asked when we talk about our expedition. However, more than anything we want people to see that we are everyday people. The only thing that separates us is the decision to DO what we dream. What we have is intention, determination and the ability to prioritise our adventure. We want to encourage ordinary people, especially women, to have a dream and pursue it. It starts with writing it down and putting yourself out there. Be brave and go for it!



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Flat bottomed girl

views

from the canal

Introducing **VALERIE POORE** as she takes the helm of our regular barge boat column.



Vereeniging's horizontal steering wheel.

Once upon a time, there was a forty-something woman living high up on the escarpment in South Africa. That woman was me and I was very happy with my high-altitude lifestyle. I was living in Krugersdorp, a suburb to the west of Johannesburg with an impressive elevation of more than 1,700 metres above sea level; a somewhat heady and exalted atmosphere, you might say.

South Africa suited me well in every way: the colourful people, the outdoor life, the rich wildlife and environment. It was made for someone like me; someone who lives for sunshine, fresh air, travel and adventure.

How is it, then, that I now find myself living in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, a city of which around ninety percent is between five and six metres below sea level?

It also happens to be chilly, wet and windy, a total contrast to my former life. And yet I love it.



“I learnt about rust and how it never sleeps; I learnt about cleaning hulls and anti-fouling. I became obsessed with condensation and how to prevent it (I still haven't succeeded), and I learnt about woodwork, steelwork, welding, and plumbing.”

It seems crazy, but the reason I've managed to adapt as well as I have has to do with a heap of rusting rivets and iron, all held precariously together in a beautifully elegant historic barge. But before I get to that, perhaps I should give you some background.

Back at the end of the nineties, my then husband was offered work in the Netherlands. Given the difficulties of finding employment in Johannesburg at the time, he accepted and took a twelve-month contract. After that year, though, it became clear he didn't want to return to South Africa, so with some sadness, I packed my own bags, my child and my dogs and followed him. I arrived in Rotterdam to start a new year in 1999.

At first, I wasn't that enamoured of the place; it was everything I've mentioned – you know, cold, wet and windy. Not my kind of place at

all, I thought. But during that first year we discovered the Oude Haven, a harbour dedicated to the restoration of historic barges, and that was what changed my mind. In fact, it bowled me over. I fell hopelessly in love with the romance of living on an old boat and all that went with it.

To cut a long story short, and leaving out the complicated murk of what became marital misery, it was in 2001 that I found myself living in the Oude Haven on a 1920s Dutch barge. Husband had moved on but I decided to stay, which, considering my dislike for all the damp and chilly stuff, says a lot for the sheer magical appeal of this barging community. I was charmed by the quirky characters who became my neighbours (individuals with a capital 'I').

I was captivated by the grace and form of the barges: the tall-masted *tjalks* and *klippers*, sleek

luxe motors and the muscular tugboats. I revelled in the ethos of preserving these gorgeous vessels as symbols of Dutch heritage. Above all, I loved the whole lifestyle; so much so that at the end of the year, I bought my own barge, and thereby hangs the rest of the tale (or should I say the tail of the tale?).

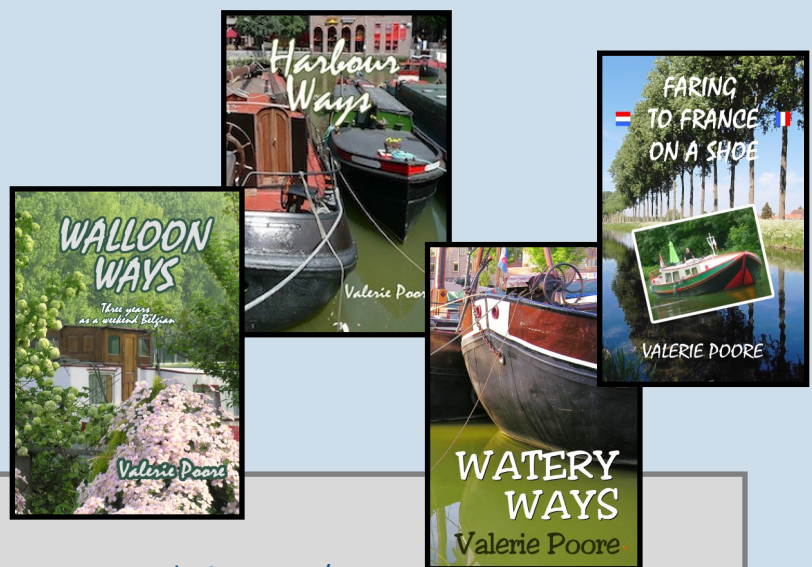


knew I had to do the whole conversion myself because I was the only one I could rely on. So I set about it one small step at a time.

I learnt about rust and how it never sleeps; I learnt about cleaning hulls and anti-fouling. I became obsessed with condensation and how to prevent it (I still haven't succeeded), and I learnt about woodwork, steelwork, welding, and plumbing. It was a major undertaking, but I was uplifted and enriched by the whole experience. I loved and still love my barge so much it's almost unhealthy. Even in hindsight, it's been worth every frustration, every anxiety and every hurdle I've had to overcome.

As for the harbour, much has changed in the time since I first made my home here, but it is still a wonderful community and a uniquely beautiful sight, lying as it does in the heart of a modern high-rise city. It has been a place of great inspiration for many, and for me, it is the only way of life that makes sense – after Africa, that is.

I spent the following three years going through a massive learning curve. It was like inventing my own obstacle course. My barge was an empty hull when I bought it. It was also in very poor condition; hence the heap of rusting rivets I mentioned before. As a somewhat penniless divorcee, I couldn't afford anything else, but I knew it was what I wanted and I was determined to continue living on the water. I also



Valerie's books can be found at:

Watery Ways: https://www.amazon.com/Watery-Ways-Valerie-Poore/dp/1907984127/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8

Harbour Ways: https://www.amazon.com/Harbour-Ways-Valerie-Poore-ebook/dp/B00II55G26/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8

Walloon Ways: <https://www.amazon.com/Walloon-Ways-Three-weekend-Belgian-ebook/dp/B018OHXOYO/Faring>

Faring to France on a Shoe: <https://www.amazon.com/Faring-France-Shoe-Valerie-Poore-ebook/dp/B06WWQ1YX4/>

Upon a painted ocean

5 W 2014

showcasing women artists

If you paint or draw marine subjects and would like your work included here, please email us at editor@sistershipmagazine.com



ABOVE: Sailing vaka (waka) in the Marquesas.

RIGHT: 'White horses' inspired by an upwind passage from Tahiti to the Marquesas.

Blog: www.andreaengland.net

Instagram: www.instagram.com/andreaenglandart

ANDREA ENGLAND is an artist, sailor and primary school teacher. She and her husband Jim recently cast off the mooring lines to cross the Pacific from New Zealand to Canada in their 36' sloop, *Island Prism*. Andrea is inspired by the beauty and power of the ocean and the spectacular and often quirky wildlife that call it home. Painting and drawing enables her to keep a unique and personal record of her voyage, and to share the magic of adventure.



Strait talking women



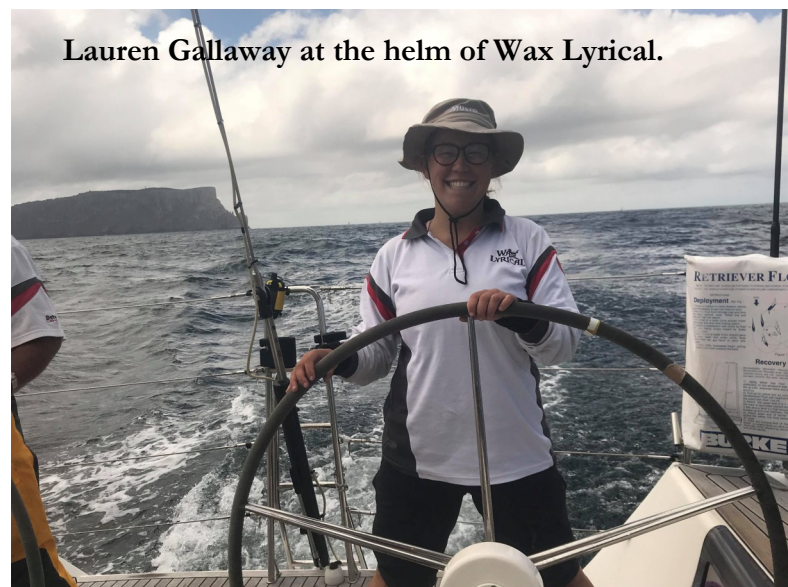
The Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is surely one of the offshore races on every ocean racer's bucket list. In Part One of this story RENEE SMITH chats to some of the women competing in the 2017 event.

I had my first sail, caught the sailing bug, and found myself with the desire to try offshore racing, all within the last few months. Though I have much to learn and have yet to experience my first offshore journey, I feel empowered to dream big and think about working towards my own potential to experience the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

One way to learn is to listen; especially to sailors debriefing after their own races from years gone by. Recently, I jumped at the opportunity to chat to a number of women sailors on a range of different yachts, competing in the recent 2017 race. I must say, I had the most fabulous and insightful time soaking up all the stories. Among the laughter, I picked up many useful tips that

have bulked up my ever-expanding sailing notebook.

The Sydney Hobart Race actually begins long before the gun goes off at 1 pm on Boxing Day. Ask skipper/owner of *Dare Devil*, Sibby Ilzhofer, and she'll tell you that the first leg of the contest is the race to the start line. Carolyn Jones, from *Another Painkiller*, laughs, 'The race is one thing, but you've got to make it to the start to begin with, and then you've got to get back. I feel like you almost need to be a logistical expert to be involved with running these sorts of campaigns.' She goes on to explain, 'The three-and-a-half-day race



Lauren Gallaway at the helm of Wax Lyrical.

is nothing when you begin to think about all the preparation work, and then sailing the boat down from Queensland before the race, and then sailing it from Hobart all the way back to Queensland after the race.’

“I knew that if I were to be selected for a Hobart position I’d really have to work hard to earn it.”

Boat maintenance, forming a dedicated and well-oiled crew, training, competing in as many offshore or short course races as you can during the lead up, provisioning, handling stress and multi-tasking are just a few of the skills necessary to take on this race. Kristi Foster, crew member on *Dare Devil* said that throughout the year she was, “Training nearly every weekend, in all the CYCA Blue Water Pointscore Races, some short course offshore races, and if we weren’t training we were

maintaining. Because part of learning the boat is maintenance.’ Kristi clarifies, ‘If you know what each part of the boat is supposed to look like, then you are more likely to quickly pick up when something is wrong, and hence keep the boat safe and racing.’

Along with Sibby and Kristi on *Dare Devil*, Lauren Gallaway on *Wax Lyrical* was also taking part in all the CYCA Blue Water Races. New to this boat, after crewing the 2016 season on *Local Hero*, and the 2017 Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Race on *The Goat*, Lauren was out there to show owner/skipper Les Goodridge that she was a keen, young ocean-racer who he could rely on to be committed to the team and always ready to give 100 percent. Lauren states, ‘You have to be prepared to show up every time, always giving everything you’ve got. *The Wax*, like many other boats, already had a big, established crew before I joined. I knew that if I were to be selected for a Hobart position

Wax Lyrical.



I'd really have to work hard to earn it. Yes, each Blue Water Race was another opportunity to learn about the boat and train offshore as a crew, but as an individual, they were my opportunities to show my new skipper what I was made of.'

Both Claire Heenan from *Merlin* and Lynda Brayton from *Merlion* echoed Lauren's advice on joining an established crew and added that it helps to be open to try any job. 'And to be willing to try something different to what you've previously been used to,' said Kristi. 'I'll tell anyone that will listen that I'm not a spinnaker trimmer. I'm very used to doing my job on the strings and then going up to sit on the rail and watch everyone else work,' she laughed. 'I'm not usually active in the speed stuff, but apparently I'm actually quite a good trimmer as well. I would have never known had I not been prepared to try a new role.'

When asked what their race preparation involved, several women highlighted the importance of off-water fitness training. Claire Heenan, a trimmer and steerer on *Merlin* focuses on core and upper body strength to help keep her at her best for these roles on a big yacht. 'I am relatively fit and strong, but at 5'2"', I am not as strong as some of the blokes on board, so I leave the big heavy lifting to those most suited. This is a team sport – use your team and play to your strengths.'



The view from *Dare Devil*
(Photo credit Kristi Foster).



Carolyn Jones, from *Another Painkiller*, comes from an elite soccer background, and spoke further on the importance of physical fitness. 'You can't underestimate the physical preparation for a Sydney Hobart Race. I did a pretty significant strength and conditioning block, plus Pilates, and from a pit angle, it really helped me get through the rigours of pulling up halyards etc. In hindsight, I probably should have done more cardio training as well. Because, if you are both fit and strong, you'll find that your ability for efficient rest and recovery improves, as does your general sleep, and you'll also be able to concentrate for longer when on watch.'

"Skimming across the top of the water, hull humming, 19.3 knots boat speed sustained for four minutes – an amazing feeling."

Carolyn's race preparation also involved the mammoth task of provisioning to feed 10 crew. 'I come from a health and nutrition education background, so I did a bit of research on dehydrating food. When we picked up *Another Painkiller* from Sydney in October, I made a number of different dehydrated foods to trial for the delivery trip to Queensland. I learnt a few lessons from that, and then did a full scaled up version of that for the Sydney Hobart Race.' Carolyn elaborates, 'We used to put food in foil containers, but I just found that my dehydrated food methods were so much more user friendly and safer in the galley. You literally only have to soak it, heat it, and let it sit for a bit. I was also saving big on storage space, reducing waste, and preserving nutrition. It was very successful for us – huge preparation time but [it] paid off in the end.'

Dare Devil's food preparation was also focused on keeping the crew's nutrition up. 'We had a very balanced menu with fresh food and vacuum-packed meals that could

easily be heated up, especially considering the number of different diets we had on board. Vegetarians, pescatarians, and people who don't eat vegetables were all eating dinner from the same pot. That is, a pot of boiling water filled with cryovac bags of different individual serving sized meals,' laughed Kristi Foster.

Every boat and crew have a support team of unsung heroes working quietly behind the scenes. They get their crew to the start line. 'My family are my biggest fans and their never-ending support keeps me moving forward in my sailing. Everyone needs a support crew like my family,' said Lauren on *Wax Lyrical*. 'My mum always helps with the food preparations. From the homely comforts of her Shepherd's Pie, or baking the Christmas fruit cake using Nana's recipe. When it's the middle of the night, half-way through the race, and I'm tired and a bit hangry, something special from home is a real pick-me-up.'

"The relentless cycle of: take several photos, throw up, take several photos, throw up."

For Lynda Brayton on *Merlion*, this Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race was her first, and she was excited to continue her father's tradition of competing in this race. 'I had a bit of a weird lead up to the start line, in that my mum was hospitalised on December 21st. So, I was at the stage where I wasn't sure if I now wanted to go on the race or not,' said Lynda. 'But because growing up, our family Christmases were my dad driving up highways to go sail in the race, Mum asked me to promise her that I'd still go. And to that I replied – 'Well maybe you can promise me not to die while I'm gone.' True to each of their words, Lynda raced in her first Sydney Hobart, and her mum not only didn't die while Lynda was away but was looking towards being discharged at the time of her interview.

Many boats had their support teams out on Sydney Harbour on Boxing Day, joining hundreds of thousands of spectators to see them off the start line. I was on Lauren's Dad's 38-foot fishing boat, and yet I still felt dwarfed and lost among the amazing on-water atmosphere. The start was electric, and the atmosphere is really something that can be only experienced, rather than described.

For Lynda Brayton on *Merlion*, the start was one of her favourite parts. 'The start and the finish were the most exciting bits, and the bit in the middle is hunkering down to work in the three-hours-on, three-hours-off routine. Once you get out in the ocean, apart from the navigation, it can be like any other ocean race. I've previously done two Melbourne Hobart races and one Melbourne Launceston, but the start of the Sydney Hobart was an awesome race experience.' Claire Heenan on *Merlin* had a great start and led the middle start line fleet out The Heads. 'Merlin even managed to be on the TV broadcast for a few seconds.' As we all know, this is a great media achievement when you are anything other than a super-maxi.

Among the hundreds of boats and spectator craft of all shapes and sizes were the buzz of helicopters. I counted 12, but Mel Yeomans on the *Hugh S. George* start boat counted 14. I may have missed counting the other two helicopters while throwing up over the side. If you want to avoid sea sickness, I suggest you steer well away from looking down a high powered super telephoto camera lens while on water that is non-stop wash! I was able to capture some lovely shots of Lauren Gallaway on *Wax Lyrical*, as well as Lisa Blair and her all-female crew on *Climate Action Now* (more about Lisa to follow in Part 2) but only through the relentless cycle of 'take several photos, throw up, take several photos, throw up'. I still laugh while saying this, so it wasn't completely nightmare-ish to go through, and the resulting photos were worth it.



All the women I spoke to describe this Sydney Hobart as a dream race with dream weather. Lauren Gallaway on *Wax Lyrical* did find something a little strange though. 'I was wearing thermals and my bear suit in Bass Strait for the 2016 Sydney Hobart, but this year I was wearing shorts and t-shirt. I was still too warm and was actually tempted to sail Bass Strait in my bra,' she laughed.

Kristi Foster, on *Dare Devil*, noted marked differences between her two Sydney Hobart experiences as well. 'My first Hobart was mostly uphill, and this one was mostly downhill. When you're in charge of the A3 (spinnaker) in 25-30 knots - ooo scary stuff,' she said. 'We saw our top speed of the race while I was on spinnaker and Sibby was on the helm. *Dare Devil* suddenly lifted with the breeze, skimming across the top of the water, hull humming, 19.3 knots boat speed sustained for four minutes - an amazing



feeling.’ Lynda Brayton described *Merlion* as a beautiful boat to sail. ‘Although she goes better upwind than downwind. So, when we lost both our spinnaker halyards on the first day in a downwind race, we were like – okay, let’s just get there in one piece.’

Repairs, repairs, and more repairs are not uncommon in any ocean race. Claire Heenan from *Merlin* smiled as she declared that the *Merlin* crew could have had a toga party at Constitution Dock with the remnants of their two kites. ‘We tore the work-horse A3 spinnaker on the first afternoon. Two hours of repairing allowed us to use it for another four hours before it totally shredded itself. The A5 spinnaker we lost the next evening.’ The damage count didn’t stop there for *Merlin*, and it ended up slowing them down and ruining their handicap chances.

‘On top of the damaged spinnakers, the boom suffered some internal damage that prevented us from reefing the mainsail –

somewhat alarming with a small southerly coming up the Tasmanian coast on the third afternoon. Good boat positioning, preparation and some kind boat handling prevented this from being too much of an issue.’ But it didn’t end there for Claire. ‘We then hit a sunfish! Quite a jolting experience – but no damage done (unlike *Hollywood Boulevard* on their return journey). *Merlin* is a very solidly built yacht, but I would like to leave sunfish alone in the future!’

Lauren Gallaway and *Wax Lyrical* also had a closer-than-desired encounter with an ocean dweller. ‘I was grinding on a spinnaker winch, when I looked down over the rail right as a pilot whale came to the surface and bumped into us. The poor thing continued swimming on, probably with a big headache, and did a giant poo. The collision brought our skipper flying up from below deck, where he then discovered what had happened, and declared that he almost did one in his pants as well,’ she giggled. ‘Thankfully there was no damage

to either whale or yacht.’ Speaking further on damage, ‘We too had our share of sail repair work. The most memorable was when I was resting in one of the bunks and a call came out from up on deck that they were sending a sail down that needed to be repaired. I jumped up and went and stood beneath the hatch to bring it in. Well, in came the sail as well as half the ocean with it. I felt like a cartoon character that had just been pummelled by a deluge.’

“We seemed to be within sight of Tasman Light and Cape Raoul for an eternity.”

There were more memorable moments all-round from this race, and each of the women I spoke to happily recounted numerous buzzing moments, from magical sunrises or sunsets. Lynda Brayton and *Merlion* were around Tasman Island on dusk as the moon rose. ‘I had scattered some of my dad’s ashes at the Pipe Organ, so that’s a pretty special place for me. We also had around five hours at Tasman Island where we had no breeze – I had no sails up for my whole watch.’ Lynda continued, ‘I think it should be two races – Sydney to the Iron Pot, and then the Iron Pot to Hobart, because they are like two separate races. We had a Tassie boat about five to six nautical miles behind us, and then in the Derwent they ended up being less than a mile behind. It was so close!’

It is commonly quoted that races are won and lost in the Derwent. And no story is quite as exciting as that on *Dare Devil*, as told by Kristi Foster. ‘We managed to take 15 positions in the last day. Ending day two we were in the 70s, halfway through day three we were in the 50s, and then we ended up 45th over the line. We rounded Iron Pot level pegged with *Duende*, then they just changed gears and took off, and we didn’t think we’d see them again. And then right on the finish line we pipped them by six seconds. I think



ABOVE: India and Lauren from *Wax Lyrical*.

we were only going one-and-a-half knots, but we let out one hell of a noise when we went over the line just before them. After that, the hard part was that we were parked next to them in Constitution Dock.’

‘You’ve really got to get to the Derwent at a good time, otherwise you just lose it. We were so close but so far...’, explains Carolyn Jones from *Another Painkiller*. Breakages while crossing Bass Strait slowed *Another Painkiller’s* race down quite significantly. ‘Ultimately it cost us entry into the Derwent at a good time,’ said Carolyn. ‘We got into the Derwent fairly well on approaching dark, and the Derwent just shut down. So, we didn’t end up getting to the finish line until 2:30 am the next morning. But even at 2:30 am we had a little welcoming committee at the dock. I’m a Tasmanian, so the highlight of the race for me was the finish – coming into Hobart is pretty amazing.’

For Claire Heenan and *Merlin*, the last 40 miles took 12 hours. ‘We seemed to be within sight of Tasman Light and Cape Raoul for an eternity, followed by an incredibly slow trip up the river. Despite this we did gain places with some smart sailing for the limited wind puffs and back eddies that were out there,’ said Claire. ‘We crossed the line in a gossamer, just under three-days race time – a

day faster than our 2015 race. Let the celebrations begin!’

Following the race closely from home as Lauren Gallaway’s media woman, my skin tingled as I watched over three minutes of footage shot from her phone, as they motored past the Taste of Tasmania and into Constitution Dock – the whole footage stream contained people standing up from their food and drink to clap and cheer *Wax Lyrical* pass by. Kristi Foster recounted a similar experience for *Dare Devil*, with a humorous addition. ‘Our bowman was hurriedly putting the Rolex flag up (a prerequisite that has to be done before entering the marina), when he got a marriage proposal from a woman at the Taste of Tasmania. And then I think he spent the next three days trying to find her,’ she laughs, ‘He didn’t find her – but he said that that was his absolute highlight.’

‘Hobart is an awesome place to be between Christmas and New Year – it just pumps!’ said Claire Heenan. ‘People everywhere, lots of food and wine stalls, entertainment, Taste

of Tasmania, MONA (Museum of Old and New Art) – just great. A wonderful way to cap off a great race.’ Lauren goes on to explain, ‘To once again be part of this special race, amongst so many other amazing sailors – is just the best.’

On completing her second Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race at the age of 19, Lauren said, ‘Making it to the finish line was achievement enough, but then we discovered that we were placed overall third in PHS (Performance Handicap System). What a race!’

What a race indeed! And in the words of Claire Heenan from *Merlin*, ‘I will be back... Deo volente...’.



Renee is an incomplete paraplegic, MS patient, and adaptive sailor from Sydney, Australia. She had her first experience on a yacht in mid-2017, and was shown the freedom sailing could offer through the not-for-profit organisation Sailors with disABILITIES (SWD). Since that first addictive exposure, her weekly routine now involves fitting as much sailing as possible around her research career in plant physiology. As a crew volunteer with SWD’s programs, Renee trades her wheelchair in for a 54’ racing yacht, and takes groups of kids and adults who have a disability or disadvantage out on Sydney Harbour for a sailing experience that focuses on ability, optimism, confidence and achievement. Renee is also a member of SWD’s racing team, crewing weekly in harbour race series and regattas, and working towards offshore racing. Outside of this weekly routine, she enjoys supporting her friends in their dinghy or yacht racing careers, and photographing regattas and offshore races.

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2017 Go East Participants 'Gadji' - New Caledonia
Image Credit: Luke Ludemann - DIY Sailing

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Sailing, Sydney NSW
Mandatory Credit: Tourism Australia
Photographer: Hugh Stewart

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My perfect dinghy



ELLEN MASSEY LEONARD discusses
the quest for her ideal dinghy

Go into any dinghy dock, anywhere in the world, and chances are you'll see rows and rows of inflatables with outboards. Or, as a good friend of mine calls them, deflatables. Granted, this is an eminently practical choice for a cruising dinghy. They're about the easiest thing afloat to operate; they can cover big distances quickly; they're one big fender so won't damage anything when you come alongside a yacht a bit fast and rough after some sundowners; they're excellent for scuba diving; and they can stow aboard nicely for passages once they're deflated.

Traditional

For many years, however, ocean voyagers used rowing dinghies, built of wood, and later, fiberglass. Maybe because I'm a bit of a traditionalist – I sailed to the Arctic on a cold-molded wooden cutter without a pilothouse – I haven't yet left their ranks. But it really isn't that.

There are a lot of practical reasons for having a hard rowing dinghy. First off, I enjoy rowing: it's great exercise and can be wonderfully meditative. It's hard to get

enough cardio exercise while cruising, and rowing is a simple way to build it into one's daily routine. Secondly, it's quiet and, as a bird nerd and wildlife nut, that's really important to me. You can't spend hours watching a green heron stalk its prey if your outboard motor scares him away.

Then there's the satisfaction of being skilled at something that approaches art. Rowing smoothly, feathering your strokes, and coming alongside a yacht or dock as if the fenders were eggshells, gives you – on a small scale, of course – that pleasing feeling of accomplishment every time you take the dinghy somewhere.

And finally, you make friends. Rowing – compared to an outboard motor – is slow and quiet, which allows time to exchange greetings with other yachts as you pass by. People on the dock ask you about your rowboat. Locals in seafaring cultures, like Vanuatu, appreciate sailors who propel small craft in a similar way to themselves. And any other cruiser in the anchorage with a rowing dinghy will soon become a good friend. Every year it's a smaller and smaller club.

What rowboat, then?

Hard dinghies range in quality, size, cost, and type. The best rowboats are long, sleek, and lightweight – think racing crew shells. But those hardly make the best tender for a 40' monohull making her way around the world. A cruising tender must row well, but also fit easily on deck and carry a lot of junk. Then there's the cost issue. Like so much in life, a compromise is in order.

For many years, my husband Seth and I erred on the side of fit-on-deck, hold-lots-of-junk, and cost-pretty-much-nothing. On *Heretic*, the 1968 S&S cutter on which we sailed around the world, Seth and I had a beamy 8' fiberglass dinghy, provenance unknown, almost certainly molded from an old lapstrake dinghy whose waterborne days were past.

That little tender had the great advantage of being free, and it served us well, as workhorse and plaything. She carried – among many other things – our huge ropes and tire fenders for the Panama Canal, our engine's transmission to go ashore for repair, hundreds of gallons of water, and provisions for three ocean crossings.

We rowed her up rivers overhung with mangroves in Fiji; dolphins played around her in New Zealand; and she faithfully ferried us and all our scuba gear to scores of dive

sites – both famous and undiscovered – from Polynesia to Bermuda.

On our current boat, *Celeste* – a custom-built cold-molded cutter, a slightly smaller, but better built, Dyer Midget served the same role for over 9,000 miles from Victoria, British Columbia to the Arctic Ocean and back. In her, Seth and I rowed among bits of sea ice, encountered a 'Spirit bear' – a white black bear unique to northern coastal British Columbia – and were charged by a big Alaskan brown bear protecting his just-caught salmon. (That ended with no one hurt, by the way.) We drifted in lagoons and quiet coves watching harlequin ducks, kingfishers, coyotes, sea otters, and even a pack of wolves. And we ferried new friends to dinner on board.

All this is representative of the greater lesson that one can have a wonderful time with what one has already – that it's not necessary to wait for the dream boat to sail over the



***Celeste's* 7' Dyer Midget proves her worth in the brash ice at the edge of the polar pack ice, Arctic Ocean north of Alaska.**



horizon. But, of course, we all have the 'dream' boat and the 'dream' tender, and for me that's always been a stacking dinghy.

Stacking dinghies

My fascination with stacking/nesting dinghies started almost at the very beginning of Seth's and my circumnavigation – in December 2006 in Beaufort, North Carolina. There we met a British couple who had recently crossed the Atlantic on their older Hallberg-Rassy, using a homemade nesting plywood rowboat as their tender. Here was a boat that rowed much better and faster than our fat 8' faux-lapstrake thing, could carry even more junk, and could fit even better on deck! Unfortunately, we had no time to build such a boat ourselves, as we planned to reach New Zealand, or even Australia, before the next twelve months were up, and we had no money, so an already-built boat, or even a kit, was beyond us.

Fast forward seven or eight years to *Celeste*. Knowing the shortcomings of our Dyer Midget; the inability to stretch one's legs out straight while rowing, and lack of capacity for scuba gear, I did a lot of online research on

stacking dinghies. I drooled over the Port Townsend 11. It's an elegantly simple, lightweight and sleek craft that rows like a dream – I've tried one and fell in love – and it can fit in a tiny on-deck footprint once disassembled. And there was an option for a sailing rig – perfection! There was also Chesapeake Light Craft's Passagemaker Take-Apart, which looked equally beautiful and fun to row and sail. I guessed that the Passagemaker's slightly larger beam would make it a bit better suited to dive gear than the PT11, but the PT11 looked more compact when nested.

Dream Dinghy

Once again, however, both the cost and time issues came into play. The big boat invariably takes precedence for maintenance and repairs – i.e. time and money – so the cost and time needed even for the PT11 kit wasn't feasible and the Dyer Midget was our tender for the Arctic. Upon our return to the Puget Sound area, though, we once again went on the hunt for a nesting dinghy. This time we found the 'dream' dinghy – if there is such a thing.



Meeting a fellow rower - a local fisherman well up a mangrove-lined river in Fiji.

A newly-built Chameleon – a stacking tender designed by Danny Greene in Bermuda – came up for sale (online, by owner) at a price we couldn't pass up. The Chameleon is built from plans with the stitch and glue plywood/epoxy technique. She's 10'4" LOA with 4'2" beam and a hull weight of 100 pounds (approx. 45 kg), each section weighs only 50 pounds (approx. 22.5 kg), easy enough for one person to lift. Nested, her on-deck footprint is only 5'4" by 4'2". She's built of 1/4" marine plywood, fiberglass cloth, and West System epoxy. She has small buoyancy chambers at the stern and either a big buoyancy chamber in the bow or – as ours has – a watertight locker in the bow. A long thwart fitted lengthwise provides the seat for both the oarsman and a passenger in the stern.

To my mind, the only real downside is that our Chameleon does not have a sailing rig or centerboard trunk. (There are plans available for a sailing Chameleon, but ours is a simple rowing one.)

The PT11 and the Passagemaker have

advantages over our Chameleon, but in the end I actually think we found the perfect tender for us. The PT11 and the Passagemaker are more beautiful, with their bright wood finish and sleek lines. They're a little bigger, and it's likely that they row more easily and faster. On the other hand, our Chameleon – 'glassed and painted on the inside as well as out – better withstands the daily knocks she receives from stony Alaskan beaches on the outside and junk on the inside: including water and fuel jugs, fishing gear, engine bits and what-have-you. And I'm less worried about marring a perfect finish.

Finally, the fact that she's just a wee bit smaller means she fits perfectly on *Celeste's* foredeck between the cabin trunk and the capstan.



Newly acquired Chameleon nesting dinghy, stacked on *Celeste's* foredeck.



*“This time we found the 'dream' dinghy
– if there is such a thing.”*

The stacking dinghy proves perfect for a fishing adventure in Alaska.



Seth rowing the stacking dinghy in the wilderness of British Columbia.

So Seth and I got lucky and finally – all these years after meeting the British couple in Beaufort – found our favorite dinghy. Now just to head south to Baja and start scuba diving from her.



ELLEN MASSEY LEONARD caught the sailing bug as a toddler and has been sailing offshore since the age of 20 when she and her husband Seth set off to voyage around the world. Following their circumnavigation, they sailed to the Arctic Ocean, cruised extensively in Alaska, and are currently en route down the California coast to Mexico. Ellen is a frequent contributor to sailing and adventure magazines in the USA, UK, and Canada, and she chronicles her adventures at:

<http://gonefloatabout.com>



Boatschooling

LYNDY ATKINSON from *Homeschool Ahoy* explains ‘Who we are and why we chose this life.’

Why homeschool?

Have you ever wondered what it would be like living on a boat and travelling with children? Ever dreamed of living with less and experiencing more? Have you found yourself questioning the current educational model and how you and your child can be more proactive in their education? I did.

I’m a 40-something mother of two who loves her kids to bits. I love cooking, and being organised, and I don’t believe school is the best place for my kids to get an education. My husband is a talented and successful engineer, a competent and knowledgeable captain of over 25 years and a loving husband and father. Everyone wants their children to find their dream and follow it. My husband is one of those people who knew at an early age what he wanted to do in life and he did it. He’s also more into unschooling (child-led learning) than I am.

We have two precious little girls to share this life with and after sending the eldest (Miss 12) to school for her first year and finding it seriously lacking, (we refer to those 12 months as her ‘gap year’) we pulled her out and decided to educate her at home instead.

We were already in the process of selling the family home to buy a boat; the boat kids we’ve met on the dock were so impressive we wanted the same for our daughter – she’s an adventurous spirit. I was concerned that school would knock that out of her, that the other kids would tell her who she was, and that she might believe them. It was a decision that we didn’t take lightly and wasn’t all that popular with some of our friends. Luckily, we had the full backing of our families. When our second daughter (Swab) came along we were happy with our progress with daughter number one, so Swab’s never been to school at all and she’s nearly 10.

Now, I know what you’re thinking – that we may have boasted about our lifestyle, put school down, raved about the benefits and debated hotly, but it’s not true. We kept to ourselves pretty much. We became the

fascination of others, understandably. Everyone wanted to know why we made our decision and we learnt to say less and less for fear of offending. I've always been very passionate about home education, but it got easier to just smile and wave, and wait for the results to speak for themselves.

We decided to throw convention to the wind and sell all our belongings, pretty much everything, and move onto a boat. We sold the family home and swapped it for 40 feet of catamaran – a 'condomaran' if you like. How would the children cope? Would they be safe? Were we crazy? What about what the kids want, are you really that selfish? Yep! I guess we are! This is our life; my husband and I have always agreed. The girls are along for the ride and when they turn 18 they can make their own decisions. Kids want few things in life other than food and shelter; but they do want happy parents.

We became accustomed to being asked at the supermarket in the middle of the day, 'school holidays huh?' I never got used to strangers asking the girls, but treated it as a learning opportunity for both them and the children – at first. Now the girls are so used to being asked why they aren't at school that whatever assumption the person asking comes up with, they just agree with that.

Then you meet people who are truly interested. I'm happy to answer questions when they come from the right place.

Does it work?

The proof is in the pudding so to speak! The girls are happy, well adjusted 'tweens' that have their passions, make friends easily and are well regarded by their peers and adults alike. We are very proud of them.

Everyone wants to offer advice on how best to 'teach' the children. I usually jumble it all up and come up with my own version of it! I'm happy to offer my own experience to those who are homeschooling or contemplating it. I'll do my best to point you in the right direction, heck I've made a few mistakes others could probably learn from, but my best piece of advice is that each child is an individual. What works for one won't always work for the other so you learn to be flexible. It's one of the great things about



PHOTOS: Miss 12 and Swab

home education and particularly, unschooling. We can follow the child's lead and adapt as we go. Plus, what child wouldn't want to learn how to be a pirate and navigate the seven seas? Who wouldn't want to learn geography from the bow of a boat? How much maths can you squeeze out of learning navigation, and science from reading the weather? What about the guy that taught us how to hog-tie a mud crab, fish, and collect oysters in the Whitsundays?

We don't do 'school-at-home' like we did at the beginning because frankly it didn't work for us. If you want to do 'school-at-home', why not just send them to school? Most people start this way as they get into their swing. It's all based on fear.

“Learn how to conquer the fear of ‘screwing your kids up’ by taking them out or indeed never sending them to school at all, and everyone benefits.”

We understand any discrepancies in their education reflect solely on us, the same as teachers carry the burden of students that fall behind in a traditional school. However, what social habits could they learn only from children their own age? Indeed, what will they miss out on if we don't send them to school? Ah, but what will they gain!

We did struggle at first but I found out about a lovely lady who mentors parents and families wishing to achieve the status of 'unschooler'. She would skype call us once a week from Canada and discuss our hopes and fears and we soon learned to love unschooling. This seems to work best for our eldest but not always for daughter number two. Swab prefers some bookwork and even made her own 'school' uniform. She's a strange little egg.

Like I said, what works for one doesn't always work for the other so keep an open mind

when you start. Don't come in with a set of rules that don't fit the child, you're just setting yourself up for failure. Remember it's their education, and you'll get further with it if you follow their lead. Kids are born to learn. We don't tell the girls what to learn, we nurture their interests and discuss everything life presents us with.

Swab taught herself how to read. We tried, believe me, but she learnt despite our best efforts. In fact, it wasn't until I stopped trying to teach her that she became passionate about books. She reads all the time now. Miss 12 is mad about history, English history is her absolute favourite. She's saving to go to England and can name all the monarchs. She paints doll houses in the Victorian style, reads all the time and knows a lot about the sea life she encounters. Her latest passion is photography and she is loving being on the Great Barrier Reef currently.

Unschooling is not dropping education altogether, that's radical unschooling. I'll go into it a bit more another time but for now, you can imagine it as education as it was



intended to be – organic and child-led. We often joke our kids are free range not caged. Do I have a problem with the education system? No! I think many kids have a great time at school and it can work very well for them. I loved school myself. However, I don't believe it's best to have a cookie-cutter, one-style-fits-all type of system and unfortunately that's the best way to educate the masses. We are fortunate to be able to culture and nurture our children more intimately than most families get the chance to do. I believe that to be true. Family comes first for us. We don't go to day jobs anymore, we spend most days hanging out with the kids – we are all learning, all the time!

Travelling with kids, living on a boat and educating them outside of school – it's not a new concept. We are not claiming to be trailblazers. We just want to spend as much time as we can with our girls while they still

want to hang out with us, and give them the best experience and education we can from home. So far, it's working! As soon as it doesn't work we will reassess.

Our boat's name is *Katsumi*. It means 'victorious beauty' – to us it signifies victory, because for 20 years we dreamed about this life, and finally got the guts to just jump in and do it. I'm looking forward to sharing our experience with you – warts and all, and hope to see you out there somewhere; we are always on the lookout for the 'kid boats!'



Lynda Atkinson (Lyndy) is a wife, mother and small business owner who has lived aboard their Lagoon 400 *Katsumi* since 2011. She began her working career in administration and accounting but quickly bored of it. In 1993, Lyndy moved overseas with her then-partner and future husband to travel and work on luxury super yachts cruising the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, the American East coast, and the Pacific. Interested in pursuing the nomadic life, a move to live aboard once the family came along 12 years later was a natural fit. In mid-2017, Lyndy and the family switched from being liveaboards who work ashore to full time cruisers. They have plans to re-visit the East coast of Australia before dipping their toes in the waters off Indonesia or Tasmania or the Pacific. How great to have choices! Lyndy has an online business focussed on gut health and nutrition and blogs about their family's lifestyle at www.homeschoolahoy.com



Glorious Îles Glorieuses



Photo essay

**LYNNE
DORNING SANDS**
shows us a glimpse of
a little-known
archipelago in the
Indian Ocean.





Îles Glorieuses, (or the Glorioso Islands) lie in the Indian Ocean approximately 160 kilometres north-west of Madagascar. French owned, the archipelago comprises two islands, Grande Glorieuse and Île du Lys, and a number of small rocky islets. The islands are a nesting ground for migratory seabirds and marine turtles. Humpback whales and whale sharks frequent the surrounding waters. In 2012, the area was gazetted as a marine protected area to protect the endangered flora and fauna.





Lynne writes: we came across it quite by accident as we were sailing from Madagascar back to Tanzania in 2008. We weren't even 100 percent sure which country it belonged to, except that our C-Map charts had (Mad) next to it so we assumed Madagascar. We stopped off at Île du Lys first. As you can see it is a seabird breeding colony. Having taken research groups to Latham island and out to Aldabra and Cosmoledo in the past, we were fascinated to discover this gem in the Indian Ocean. We saw a couple of Madagascan fishing boats and had a chat to the fishermen. Between the two islands we saw many whales and caught a large tuna.

On the main island we saw tents and were hailed on the radio by the French Administration asking what we were doing. We replied that we were waiting for wind and they asked how long we intended to stay. We said, 'When the wind comes,' and they asked, 'When was that?'. We had no internet or other communications, so we asked if they knew! After some discussion, it was evident that we weren't welcome and eventually we left just before dark. We motored for a few hours until the wind came, and then had a superb spinnaker run on one tack all the way back to Dar es Salaam (about 500 nm).

For Lynne's 'bio' and
blog see page 73.



Making waves for mental health - my Clipper journey



Fremantle to Sydney (Photo credit Ernst-Jan Bultie).

SHONA DAVIES shares her mental health and Clipper challenges.

My Clipper journey began almost exactly two years ago after a devastating breakdown that left me emotionally crippled and doubting my own sanity. After having spent years as a titan of industry and serial achiever, I found myself in a very dark place where even getting out of bed and showering was an effort...and often one that I couldn't manage. This was not my first run in with the black dog of depression but it was by far the worst. Add to it something altogether new to me; dizzying panic attacks, anxiety, paranoia...I was a complete mess and all I knew was that I needed to find a way out.

Have you heard of the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race? If you're reading this magazine, I'm going to assume that you have, however if not, please visit their web or YouTube channel for a bit of an insight. It really is something quite remarkable. Seven hundred amateur sailors (40 percent of whom have never sailed before) from all walks of life taking on the adventure of a lifetime. Battling each other in 11 boats over

40,000 miles across the Seven Seas. It is a physical, mental and emotional challenge unlike any other.

So, back to my misery...and how I got there. You see, I had made a mistake...a costly one that could have had some pretty serious implications for the business. This completely jarred my world view and my understanding of who I was. How could I possibly have got something so wrong? Perfect people don't do that. I can't say I thought I was perfect but I was certainly trying to be, and work was my avenue to do so because I was good at it.

Now, if I wasn't a successful businesswoman, what was I? My perceived value of myself plummeted. Add to that breakdowns in relationships—both romantic and otherwise—and the grief of losing something very precious to me. Though I fought hard to keep it all together, I couldn't. In fact, the very act of trying to maintain control was probably what did me in in the end. Suffice to say, I wasn't a happy camper.

I was very lucky. I made a phone call to a mental health charity (Mind) who halted the immediate downward tumble and they

stopped my first (and almost my last) instinct, as a way out. They got me to open up to people who would care for me. Friends and family rallied around me and guided me to the medical professionals that could help. Work signed me off, I took medication and got myself into therapy. I had masses of support from colleagues and bosses to take the time I needed to pull myself back together. I had people who held me safe until I could pick myself up. Not everyone has that...and I want that to change. I'm only here on this race because I had that support and I believe that others deserve the same chance. Imagine what we could achieve together!

During therapy, it became quite clear to me that I had spent a lot of my life living to others' expectations. I was following other peoples' dreams and expending my energy in trying to make them happy or conform to an ideal that was not of my own making. My own happiness was secondary; my inner critic an overlord in my head. I was never doing enough...I was never enough. I decided to take myself off to Norfolk for a week to get away and think. Well...I say think, I mostly cried. Still, there was some catharsis in that I suppose. One day, walking along a deserted

beach with my dog, I lifted my tear-stained eyes to the sky and screamed, 'What the &*& # am I going to do with my life?'

I kid you not, I looked immediately down at my feet and saw something white in among the pebbles. I lifted it up and in my hands was a tiny ceramic sailboat. It was a bit battered, the paint was chipped and it looked like it had fallen off a much larger piece. It looked a little like I felt.

The ocean often helps us align our tangled thoughts.



Splicing ropes while crossing the Southern Ocean to Fremantle.



Now, I'm not a big believer in the mystic but it honestly felt like the heavens had opened and angels started to sing. I suddenly KNEW that I had to get back on a boat any way I could.

My sailing life started nearly 23 years ago in Australia where I was summarily dumped into a little Mirror and told, 'go over there'. Not having any sort of clue what I was doing, I managed to capsize myself and two crew about six times. Our instructor took little pity and would shout from his boat instructions on how to right the boat and what we'd done wrong...and eventually things started to click together. It was the first time in my life I'd chosen to do an activity because I wanted to do it solely for me and to learn by doing and achieving...well, I was hooked!

I carried on sailing through my university days but then life got in the way....I fell away from something I loved. That day on the

beach, clutching that little boat, I swore to myself that I would go back no matter what it took. I had been watching the Clipper Race for a few years after some friends had mentioned it when they saw the fleet arrive in London. By the time I got back to the cottage, I had booked my interview and started studying what I'd need to do to get in.

Two years later and here I am. 'Therapy taught me mindfulness, meditation, acceptance, boundaries, and self-determination...it opened my mind. Gym taught me physical discipline and gave me the strength I'd need to haul a 250 kilogram sail up and down from the locker. Clipper training opened my heart and being on this race has opened my eyes to all that could be. A world of possibilities. OK, some bits of boat life are less than brilliant (the heads, smelly feet, not showering for weeks on end...am I right?) but overall, this experience



Departing Cape Town, Shona onboard *Dare to Lead*, October 2017 (Photo credit Claire Davies).



is worth all the money, blood, sweat and tears that have gone into it. Fact.

Not only that but I have been able to use this race and my story as an opportunity to talk about mental health in as frank a manner as I'm able. It's more terrifying to do that than any time I spend on the foredeck in a squall, but hopefully I will reach at least one person with the message that you can still achieve amazing things in your life if you have mental ill-health. I've also been able to raise funds for the charity that helped save my life.

By mid-March, I will have completed legs three-to-five covering nearly 18,000 nautical miles. I competed in the Sydney Hobart Race and I will have crossed the Southern Ocean twice. I'm happier than I have ever been. Ever. I intend to make sailing a much larger part of my life henceforth and to continue to champion mental health as best as I'm able.

If you fancy following along, you can visit me on my blog (www.shonadavies.com), Twitter (@shonaldavies) the Clipper site (team *Dare to Lead*) or Facebook.

And with that, I leave you to your own adventures - great or small.

See you on the waves, ladies.



SHONA DAVIES is a mental health survivor and has discovered that time spent on a boat is time spent healing her soul. She's off on a (halfway) round the world yacht race that has challenged her in every way possible. She is also a wine drinker, puppy owner, runner and lover of the aesthetic. You can follow Shona's voyage via her blog www.shonadavies.com and the Clipper race at www.clipperroundtheworld.com

Penang Island~

Pearl of the

Orient



DEB BOTT takes us to one of her favourite cruising locations in South East Asia.



In July 2016, we left Australian waters on *Matilda*, our Hans Christian, Christina 43, bound for Indonesia with the Sail2Indonesia Rally. We spent a delightful, and at times dramatic, three months immersed in contrasting cultures as we travelled the Indonesian Archipelago. When the Sail2Indonesia rally finished we joined the Sail Malaysia Rally, travelling from Johor Bahru up the west coast of the Malay Peninsula to the island of Langkawi. It was during a rally stop that we were introduced to the charms of Penang Island. Out of all the places we have seen, it is Penang that has had one of the greatest impacts.

Penang is situated on the northwest coast of Malaysia. The capital, George Town, is the second largest city in Malaysia and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The beauty of Penang is the location. It is a long day sail north to Langkawi, or if you stop at some of the islands halfway you could make it in two leisurely day sails. South of Penang is the island of Pangkor, also a long day sail unless you break the trip with a stop at Pulau Talang, about three hours out of Pangkor.

Penang is in the Straits of Malacca. The body of water between mainland Malay/Butterworth and Penang Island is the Penang Strait. It is very busy in this little strait with local fishermen, visiting cruise liners, ferries, tugs and general shipping.

Penang is only a four hour drive by car or taxi from Pangkor Marina or a half day trip on public transport. If travelling from Pangkor you would catch a bus from either Lumut or Sitiawan bus depot. These buses will take you to a bus terminal in Butterworth. From here there is a courtesy bus to the ferry terminal, then board the ferry for a free ride over to George Town. Once on Penang Island the ferry terminal is beside the jetty bus interchange – all very convenient.

Mainland Malay is joined to Penang Island by two bridges. The first bridge is simply called 'Penang Bridge'. It took three years to build, spans 13.5 kilometres and opened in 1985. The second bridge opened in 2014, with the intention of easing traffic congestion on the



Second Bridge.

Penang Bridge. It is called ‘The Sultan Abdul Halim Mu’adzam Shah Bridge’ but is more commonly referred to as ‘Penang’s Second Bridge’. It is the longest bridge in Malaysia and SE Asia, spanning 24 kilometres. The Sail Malaysia Rally officially begins with all boats sailing under ‘Penang Bridge’.

The cultural diversity of the island is fascinating. The new blends with the old to make Penang unique. There is a population rich in distinct cultures, intertwining, living and working together. The main cultures are Chinese, Malays, Indians, Eurasians and Siamese. There is also an extensive expatriate population. All this results in a vast array of food to choose and a rich history to explore. Highlights to visit include; Penang Hill riding the funicular train, Kek Lok Si Temple, Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion (aka Blue Mansion), great theme parks, informative museums, quirky galleries, historical forts, the Khoo Kongsi temple, the famous Clan Jetties and, of course, George Town itself.

Our first visit to Penang was with the Sail Malaysia Rally in November 2016. We visited again on our own in March 2017, allowing several days as we sailed down the Straits of Malacca heading south bound for Johor Bahru. The beauty of cruising Penang is that you can anchor safely and go ashore knowing your tender is secure while you’re exploring. There are also two marinas. The main marina is Straits Quay. It only offers approximately 40 berths and navigating in can be difficult. It is silting up slowly, but it is well protected, and the Straits Quay water front precinct is sensational. It offers fabulous shopping,

excellent quality restaurants and cafes, impressive walkways and is close to public transport. You can anchor out the front here but unfortunately it is completely exposed to the north-north east. We sat at anchor for two days in peace and calm, but on the third day a storm rolled in from the east while we were out exploring with the rally, everyone was called back to move our boats.

The other marina is a facility run by the government marine department: Jeti Jabatan Laut, Wilayah Utara, Batu Uban Pulau Pinang. It is hard to secure a berth here. It is small and has mostly liveaboards in its berths or very long-term customers. However, if you cannot secure a berth you can anchor out the front in a well protected area. The marina allows tenders to come in, tie up and dispose of rubbish.

The Jeti Jabatan Laut anchorage is more commonly known as the Jerejak Anchorage or the Queensbay anchorage. Jerejak Island is the only other land mass around Penang and offers very good protection. The location puts you right under the ‘Penang Bridge’ where it is a short walk to the bus stops for



Straits Quay marina.

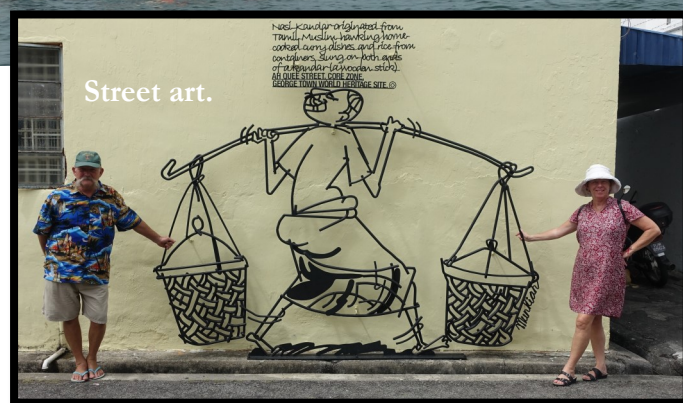


Fishermen.

travel into town. Alternatively, you can stroll down to the Queensbay Mall for supplies grabbing an Uber on the way back.

The Junk Anchorage, outside the Clan Jetties, can be a difficult anchorage to secure a good hold, and keeping clear of shipping and local traffic is fraught with danger. While the location is spot on, dinghying ashore can be troublesome. From our experience there is nowhere to leave the tender safely and any enquiries we made to tie up at the jetties were refused. We believe there is a water taxi to take people ashore from the anchored boats, but we were not able to find them or a phone number to call them. Keep in mind this anchorage is known to have a foul bottom and can be extremely busy with local traffic. We often witnessed local fishermen rafting up in large vessels, and at night they did not display lights. They also move and store the local dredging machines here, and they come and go as needed any time of the day or night. However, if you were able to get ashore safely the anchorage is right out the front of the Clan Jetties area putting you in the heart of George Town which is perfect. You can explore on foot or catch a bus as it's close to one of the two main bus terminals.

Walking around George Town was one of our first introductions to street art. In 2009 street art in the form of caricatures was



introduced for the telling of street and social history. Then in 2012, Ernest Zacharevic was commissioned to do a series of large scale murals titled: 'Mirrors George Town'. There is also a series of small 'live' pieces, including the piece: 'Little Children on Bicycle' all of which have attracted worldwide attention boosting interest in the Penang street art.

One of our most memorable experiences was being invited to the annual lighting of the Eastern and Oriental Hotel's Christmas tree. The evening made such an impression that we brought our rally friends back the next day for the Sunday roast in the Farquhar Room. What a lunch we had. Picture several different joints of meat roasted to perfection served with all the trimmings with a view over the Penang Strait.

Worth noting is the Facebook Page: Ahoy Penang – A Hub of Yachting, coordinated by Jennifer Rouse and Sharon Giraud. This page is full of information and is a great place to ask questions. Penang is also very well known



Looking down from Penang Hill.

for its medical and dental services. The Penang Times (small newspaper) is a major source of information of local events happening about the island.

Getting around Penang is made easy via their air-conditioned, very clean and ridiculously cheap regular bus service. There are two main bus terminals. One is in the main town centre at Komtar, beside the Prangin Mall. The other is near the ferry terminal at George Town. If jumping on a bus from the Komtar terminal, you need the 401E bus from bay '5' if you are heading south. There is also the free city loop bus, and a pay-as-you-go jump-on jump-off tourist bus. The free loop bus has dedicated stops around the main highlights of George Town allowing you to hop-on and hop-off all day long for nothing. The local taxis are excellent value. We used the well-priced Uber service and found the drivers informative. A small piece of advice is to take a photo of where you start from as the street names and local businesses are difficult to remember. This is compounded if

your driver does not speak English and you don't speak Malay. It's a clever idea to do this if you have a big night out and are heading home late. Something a little different, although not as cheap, is the novelty of riding a rickshaw. Our advice if you want a ride, firm up the price before you jump in.

We visited a Chinese temple called the Snake Temple. The temple itself is a typical temple of worship, but attached is a bricked, square area with tiles on the inside so that vipers can breed in the trees. Apparently, they can't climb up a tiled wall, but all the trees overhang the walkway! Inside the older area you can hold a python for a small fee and have your photo taken.

A must-do when in Penang is to ride the train up to the top of Penang Hill and visit the small village. From the George Town ferry bus terminal, you need to catch the #204 bus which will take you straight to the base of the hill. The bus stops in front of the cable car ticket office. We bought VIP tickets and



Blue Mansion veranda.

Every piece of the building is covered in decoration, including some added by the colony of bats living inside the main temple!

You cannot go to Penang and miss Little India. On your walk go via the Sri Maha Mariamman Temple. Visitors are allowed in (wash your feet), but photography is not allowed. As lovely as the temple is we always feel we are intruding on something very private, especially during prayer time.

There are hundreds of places to eat at in Little India. If you enjoy eating something a little different, you will not be disappointed.

You need time to enjoy George Town. There is just so much to see. The streets are clean, people are polite and friendly, there is a good vibe in town. We enjoyed the blend of old and new. We spent quite a bit of time rummaging around the oldest rattan weaver shop in Penang and talking to its current owner. We ate several times at a quaint little café at the 'No 1 Canon Street Café'.

avoided the queue. There is quite a bit to see up the top, all touristy things but there is a variety of food to choose from. The view is spectacular from 712 feet above sea level.

To take in some history schedule in a visit to the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion, it is very informative. For a treat, the Chocolate and Coffee museum is worth a trip and is close to the Blue Mansion. The Blue Mansion is open three times a day for a tour, so check the board for times. While we waited for our tour, we walked down the road to the Coffee and Chocolate Museum. The Museum was free and has good toilets. We enjoyed the air conditioning and took in the sights. We returned to the mansion, paid our money and joined the informative, English-speaking tour.

If you go to the Clan Jetties then a visit to the Khoo Kongsi Temple (Chinese) will give you an interesting historical background.



Snakes in the Snake Temple.



Entrance to the Chocolate Museum.

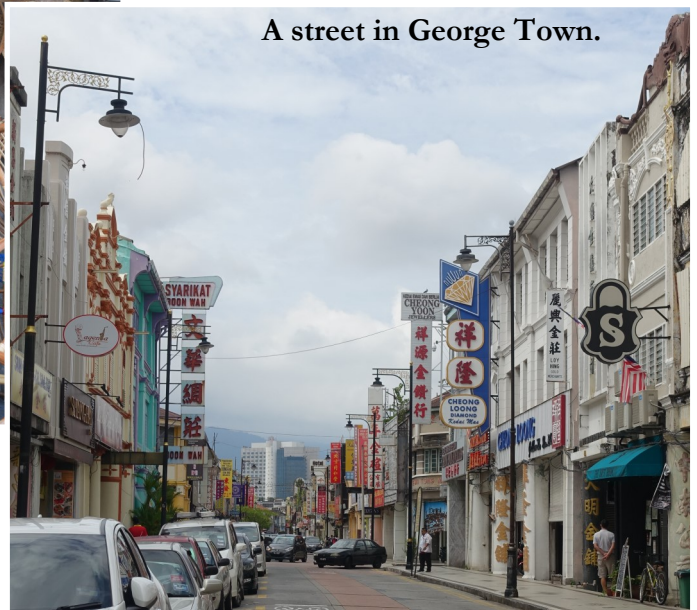
At the time of writing this article we were in Pangkor Marina doing annual maintenance and very much looking forward to splashing back in and heading north to Penang once again. This time we hope to explore the delights of Penang's west coast.



Little India, breakfast.



Cane shop.



A street in George Town.



DEBRA BOTT has been living aboard *Matilda* since 2010 having fun sailing and exploring the east coast of Australia. In 2016 *Matilda* joined the Sail2Indonesia Rally and has been travelling in SE Asia ever since. Deb is a keen photographer and a budding writer, dreaming one day of being a published author. Deb's travels on *Matilda* can be followed on her blog at: <http://svmatilda.com/>



The state flag of Penang has three equal vertical bands being light blue, white, and yellow, with an areca nut palm tree on the white center panel. The palm tree is also known by the locals as the 'Penang Palm', hence the island's name. The light blue is symbolic of the water surrounding Penang Island, the white represents peace and the yellow stands for prosperity for the state.

Shining the light on...

SHELLEY WRIGHT chats to *SisterShip* Magazine founder, **RUTH BOYDELL.**

In 2015, while checking requests from women wishing to join the Women Who Sail Australia (WWSA) group, I came across one from a woman named Ruth, who, when asked if she was involved in sailing, humbly replied that she had bought a boat in Western Australia and was sailing it back to Newcastle on the east coast. I had no idea at the time what an understatement this was (in typical Ruth-fashion!) or that she would not only become a valued friend but also inspire this adventure to relaunch *SisterShip* Magazine.

In the mid-1970s, aged just 17 and with no sailing background or passport, Ruth set off as a cook on a 64' motor launch delivering Telecom towers from Cairns to Port Moresby. Upon arrival in Port Moresby Ruth was exposed to a new world, meeting sailing folk and long-distance cruisers. Amongst them was a single-hander named Colin who was circumnavigating on a motor cruiser – with no motor. Colin's boat was equipped with only the basics, not even a bilge pump. Ruth says Colin's philosophy was that the efficiency of a frightened man (or woman!) with a bucket was all that was needed!

Ruth spent two years sailing with Colin, including an 84-day voyage from Christmas Island, in the Indian Ocean, to South Africa. On day 73 they could see their destination,



Ruth Boydell.

Durban, but with no engine, no wind, and an opposing current they drifted south and continued for another 11 days to Cape Town where they rowed the dinghy, towing the boat through the fog to make landfall. It was there that Ruth met solo sailor Ann Gash. Ruth states that this was a life changing moment. Colin began to mentor Ruth in preparation for possible solo voyages while continuing on to Brazil via St Helena. From there Ruth headed home to Australia determined to learn as much as possible in preparation for a boat of her own.

On her arrival home, Ruth's father asked her what she planned to do. She replied, 'I want to get my own boat.' Ruth states that her father's laughter and disbelief galvanised her into action, determined to prove him wrong.

Ruth settled back into life in Sydney, including working in a sail loft, until she had a major health scare in the early 1980s. Ruth had just applied to study oceanography at Flinders University, however, while in hospital awaiting the results of medical tests all she wanted was to get out of Sydney and buy a boat. The health scare was a false alarm, so Ruth headed to Western Australia for six months to work as a Jillaroo (Australian version of a female cowboy), learning skills such as welding, and saving every cent she earned.

“It is only when you begin to do something because you WANT to, that your attitude changes.”

On her return to Sydney, Ruth purchased a small car and drove up the east coast to Cairns looking at every boat for sale that she could. It was in Townsville that Ruth found *Sketty Belle*, a 30', steel, gaff rigged schooner. Adventure beckoned and with no GPS and only a plastic sextant, and a tyre for a fender, Ruth sailed to the Whitsundays, preparing *Sketty Belle* for voyages to Torres Strait, Gove, Sri Lanka, India, Chagos Archipelago, South Africa and eventually the Caribbean.

As she explored new countries and cultures

Ruth's awareness of women's issues increased, and she states that's when her 'activist self' was born.

As she sailed, Ruth took on an ever-changing crew of men. 'Either my dream was not theirs or they did not like taking orders from a woman,' Ruth explains. Journalist Simon Winchester hitched a ride on *Sketty Belle* to remote locations in the Indian Ocean to cover stories. When Simon departed in Mauritius, Ruth tackled her first solo passage, 17 days from Mauritius to South Africa. Ruth says she was fearful for much of this trip. Although she knew and trusted her vessel, and had experienced bad weather aboard Colin's boat, she worried about how she would cope on her own in a storm in this notorious stretch of ocean. Would she be rendered helpless, frozen by fear? When a wild storm with 60 knot winds finally did hit, Ruth found the experience empowering, saying that as the storm approached, and she dropped the sails, she felt joyful.

From South Africa Ruth journeyed to the Caribbean where she worked in the West Indies as a charter boat skipper (hired on the basis that if she got herself that far she must know what she was doing!) then sailed to the United States as skipper on a private yacht. Returning to Australia, Ruth left *Sketty Belle* in

PICTURED: Ruth and *Sketty Belle*.



the Caribbean, until frequent nightmares about the boat sinking led to her decision to sell.

Ruth says, for her, the main attraction of cruising was not the actual sailing but the family-like community of cruising folk, particularly the contact with inspirational and interesting women. On her return to Australia, Ruth wanted a way to continue to maintain that connection. Ruth wanted to recreate that powerful feeling of achievement after crossing an ocean and meeting up with friends again.

“Finding it easier to gather stories than to share her own, the concept for SisterShip Magazine was born.”

Ruth Boydell today.



In April 1988 the first issue of *SisterShip* was published. Over the next 12 months several issues were produced before life intervened. Ruth continued to follow her passion of all things maritime, however *SisterShip* was placed in drydock.

Twenty-seven years later, Ruth attended the inaugural WWSA Gathering on the Bay to give a talk on anchoring to an eager group of women. With her, as a gift for attendees, Ruth brought precious back copies of *SisterShip* to distribute. Captivated by these magazines, the seed was planted and plans to bring the magazine out of drydock began.

Recently, sitting in a café overlooking the ocean I quizzed Ruth about those early sailing days. Her advice to women on the water is that it is only when you begin to do something because you WANT to, that your attitude changes. As we chatted Ruth's eyes sparkled, and she alluded to numerous side adventures that occurred while sailing, adding with a chuckle, 'But that's another story.'

Ruth's life has taken another turn as she studies pastoral care and is becoming a 'death doula', assisting those who are transitioning life. She hosts death cafes in Newcastle (Australia) and plans to cruise Tasmanian waters next summer with her husband aboard their beautiful Swanson *Black Dog*.

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Cruising for critters

Sailing veterinarian SHERIDAN LATHE outlines her dream to combine life on the water with helping animals around the world.

Our journey began while sitting on a concrete verandah watching bears wrestle in China... or perhaps it began even earlier than that, when Joel first hoisted the sails with his dad on Lake Lanier, and I rescued a frog from the rain... It is hard to say how these journeys begin, when you decide to give up jobs, the comfort of living in a city, a house and so much more, to sail around the world providing free veterinary care to animals in need.

Joel has always been drawn to the water, growing up in Atlanta he would beg his dad to take out their tiny sailing dinghy. In fact, his fondest childhood memory is a storm rolling across Lake Lanier, and the exhilaration he felt with the power of the wind and water. I, on the other hand, have always wanted to save animals. From the moment I could walk I would collect frogs

from the rain and bring them to the warm shelter of our house, not realizing of course that frogs enjoy the break from the Australian summers that the rain can bring.

Our Dream

After moving to China to work with a bear rescue organization we realized that, although extremely fulfilling, our dream life was not on land. We would spend hours sitting outside watching bears wrestle and play while perusing the internet for the boat of our dreams, or at least a boat in our price range that would float. After months of searching Joel found her, a 37' aluminum monohull with a lifting keel, located half-way across the world in Panama. She was built in the Gamelin shipyard of France in 1990, a Madeira, and we already had a name for her - *Chuffed* (Aussie/British slang for pleased or happy - exactly how we were feeling).

We knew it was now or never to combine our passions of saving animals and sailing the world, so Joel jumped on a plane and flew to Panama. I kept an eye from afar on what we were already calling our new boat, but to our dismay she went under contract

while Joel was cruising at an elevation of 30,000 feet. He landed in Panama with a heavy heart, only for *Chuffed* to come back up for sale at an even lower price. Destiny, fate, other-worldly intervention; call it what you will but we took it as a sign she was meant to be ours.

Within a month Joel was living aboard and I was finishing up my time in China to join him. There was a lot to organize, not only was the boat in need of some serious TLC but we also had a veterinary clinic to set up! I started laying foundations, contacting veterinarians and animal organizations in Panama, while Joel started repairs.

After only a few days aboard Joel had put a hole in the hull after cleaning away some corrosion with a toothbrush. With no insurance and a boat taking on water we needed an emergency haul out for some

welding and fresh antifoul to get *Chuffed* living up to her name. We soon realised boat jobs can make or break a person. With leaky windows, no running water, a blocked toilet and black mould growing out of every crevice we had our work cut out for us. We tackled every job with the fierce determination that this was our dream life, and soon *Chuffed* was in a condition where she could venture out to sea.

Our work

Which brings me to the other side of our story, the veterinary work. We had ambitious goals for the veterinary side of our venture, not only did we want to provide free veterinary care to animals in need, but also educate the greater public by documenting our journey.

RIGHT: Baby two-toed sloth Sheridan worked with at a zoo in Panama.

PREVIOUS PAGE: Sheridan doing surgery by Luci light in a rural village in the Las Perlas.

BELOW: 'Spay Panama', a local organisation in Panama city. In one day the team can do 500 spay/neuter surgeries for cats and dogs in remote areas.





Local men getting dogs back into a boat after surgery.

I started small, holding a series of free lectures for local veterinarians on wildlife medicine and health, as through education we can make long term improvements in welfare for local zoo animals and rescued wildlife. The lectures also allowed me to contact local veterinarians, who helped me establish our mini-clinic on board.

“We were the main attraction in town, with children gathering after school each day to watch us ‘killing’ the animals before magically bringing them back to life, albeit missing a reproductive organ or two.”

Our first adventure was to Las Perlas, an archipelago of over 200 islands, located 35 nautical miles southeast of Panama City. Although Joel had sailing experience, I was a novice, and the Gulf of Panama is not a very forgiving playground. With the Intertropical Convergence Zone wreaking havoc on wind direction, large swells rolling in from the Pacific Ocean and Panama’s wet season at its peak, I certainly learnt a thing or two about raising the sails... then adjusting the sails... then adjusting them

again... However, it was an amazing journey and it felt so liberating to be out on the ocean.

The archipelago of Las Perlas makes for a perfect cruising ground, with an array of islands and anchorages to choose from offering protection from the prevailing northerly winds. But some of the anchorages are more challenging than others, especially once you throw in whales and their calves. We discovered that *Chuffed* seemed to be a whale-magnet with juveniles (still weighing over three tonnes) throwing themselves aimlessly out of the water only metres from the boat.

After a few days enjoying the scenery, whale watching and exploring uninhabited islands we anchored in front of San Miguel, the largest town on the largest island of Isla Del Rey. With tidal changes of five metres, and a bay with very shallow water, we ended up taking advantage of *Chuffed’s* unique conformation, lifting the keel and sitting in half a metre of water at low tide, then drifting around in the wind like a motor boat at high tide. We had fishing boats racing towards us in fear we would get stuck at low tide, and it took some explaining in ‘Spanglish’ that we would be just fine.

Once we were settled it was time for work to begin. We had come to this village with the mission to spay and neuter as many dogs as possible over five days. We rowed to shore with a suitcase full of surgical supplies and a tool box of medication, and set up our temporary clinic on a local woman's patio. We were the main attraction in town, with children gathering after school each day to watch us 'killing' the animals before magically bringing them back to life, albeit missing a reproductive organ or two.

With one doctor tending to the entire group of islands, veterinary care is something that is simply unheard of here. The dog population of the village was at a critical point, with disease and starvation making for an unhealthy group of dogs. We would walk down the streets some mornings and find puppies that had died during the night, so thin their bones caused wear marks on their

skin. The health of the dogs also has an enormous impact on the health of the people, the wildlife and the environment, with starving dogs hunting wildlife species to near extinction and spreading parasites to the children of the village. It is a horrible situation with only one humane solution - neutering and treatment of as many dogs as possible to reduce the future populations and disease.

“Reggae music blasted over stereos, so loud that Joel couldn’t even hear the heartbeat of our patient.”

It was not an easy task with only two people, I would be wrist deep in a dog's abdomen with a villager thrusting another dog in my face telling me it was sick. Reggae music blasted over stereos, so loud that Joel couldn't even hear the heartbeat of our patient.

We would spend half the morning with the sun beating down on us, and the afternoon trying to stay out of the rain. But looking out at all the smiling faces we couldn't help but feel 'chuffed.' The people in this village felt abandoned by the outside world, they were



MAIN: *Chuffed* on dock, Isla Viveros, Las Perlas.

ABOVE: Vet Sheridan Lathe aboard *Chuffed* (photo credit Regina Maria Photography).



so grateful to have people caring for their animals and the community, and in a world where everything comes at a price, they couldn't believe we didn't want money.

That is not to say we didn't receive any payment. We had children bringing us energy drinks during the hottest part of the day, bunches of bananas being delivered every afternoon and a delicious lunch of battered fish, rice and beans served to us each day. Not to mention the reward that comes in knowing you are truly making a difference. Even the dogs seemed to know we were helping them, running up to us the day after surgery for a pat and some love.

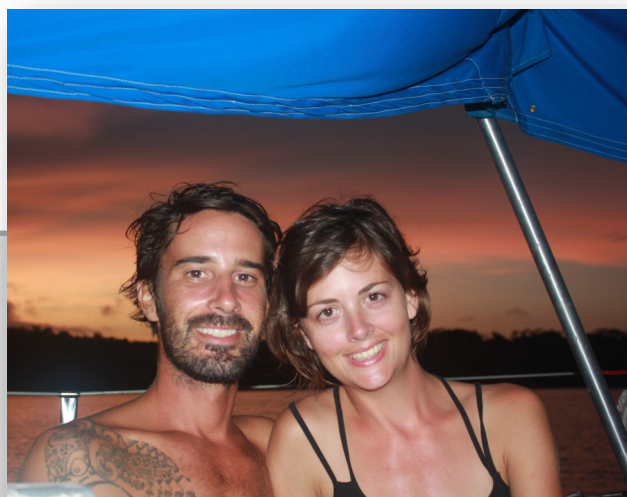
On the fifth day we placed the final suture in the last female dog on the island, with storm clouds rolling in reinforcing that our job was

finished here. Every single female dog had been spayed, effectively preventing any growth in the population and what we hope will be a slow reduction in the number of dogs here. Every animal in the village had received flea and worming treatment, and medication for any other ailment they suffered, leaving them healthier and happier.

As we rode down the hill in the back of a pick-up truck, watching the colorful shacks flash by and a beautiful sunset over the jungle encrusted mountains, we felt truly 'chuffed' to be living our dream, exploring unfamiliar places, meeting fascinating people and helping animals wherever we can.

Sheridan is an Australian registered veterinarian and Joel is an avid sailor and aquaculturist. They permanently live aboard their boat *Chuffed*, currently docked in Costa Rica.

You can follow their *Chuffed* Adventures on YouTube at www.youtube.com/vettails or on Facebook and Instagram for real-time updates "Vet Tail's Sailing Chuffed".



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Pearls of Wisdom



In the first of our Pearls of Wisdom series, JACKIE PARRY shares her tips regarding 'On Board Paperwork'.

We have been asked for most of the following documentation at some point during our travels (not all at the same port). Ensure you check the requirements for the country you are visiting.

Imperative:

- Visas
- Passports
- The ship's papers (original certificates)
- Crew lists - multiple copies at hand
- The original insurance certificate for the boat
- VAT/GST (proof of boat tax being paid) certificate
- Passport photos for everyone on board
- Proof of ownership (of vessel)
- Vaccination certificates for all on board
- Pet inoculation details and certificates (check date requirements)
- Plus many photocopies of each item
- Log book, the log book is considered a legal document, so proper log entries are important



You might also be asked for some of the following:

- Bank statements, proof of funds/property owned in home country (you may need these in some countries to prove you can support yourselves and have a reason to leave)
- List of medications on board. Anyone travelling with medications and/or syringes should carry a prescription. All medications should be kept in their labelled dispensing bottles or packages. If the medications are controlled or an injection type then it is also advisable to carry a doctor's letter authorising possession and use by the bearer
- Health insurance
- List of boat details, length, colour etc
- Ship's radio licence
- Certificate to operate the radio/VHF

- The skipper may need an International Certificate of Competence
- Fishing licence for the area you intend cruising
- Details of last haul out including details of type of antifoul paint used (keep receipts)
- Last termite inspection/treatment (keep receipts)
- List of previous ports visited and length of stay
- List of ports you intend to visit
- List of all equipment on board; radios, GPS, laptops, etc, including make and model
- Alcohol on board
- Weapons
- Engine details
- Don't forget the courtesy and quarantine flag, and that an official looking boat stamp is a great help
- Divers – if you have diving equipment on board you may be asked for a diving licence
- Cruising Permit

Useful Items:

- Photo of your pet with you to prove ownership if someone else claims them
- Photo of your boat, for the same reason above
- If travelling abroad, a letter from the marina stating where your boat is kept and you are the owner may make returning to your boat easier.

It is important to remain polite and courteous – you're a visitor, respect the rules.

If you have anything to add to this, let us know and we'll share it on our website for everyone. www.sistershipmagazine.com

Do you have a 'pearl' to share? We would love to see it! Every tip that is published goes into a draw at the end of the year for a *SisterShip* prize!

A paragraph or just a few lines - please email your 'pearls' to editor@sistershipmagazine.com to share your wisdom and be in with a chance to win!

SisterShip Magazine cruises along with an international flavour. Our contributors hail from every corner of the globe. We encourage writers to maintain their voice and therefore their local spelling. Measurements and navigation aids (IALA A and IALA B)* are different too. As valued readers, we just want to keep you on board with our ethos of a less regimented style, and a more international spirit!

*The International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA, previously known as International Association of Lighthouses) is an Inter Governmental Organisation founded in 1957 to collect and provide nautical expertise and advice.





Catching and Cooking Mud Crabs

KAREN OBERG shares her tips for catching and cooking mud crabs.

Mud crabs are certainly one of Australia's most tasty crabs and are found in the northern part of the country. Those cruising in northern Australia this coming season should, at some point, go on a crabbing mission. Like most of the tastiest seafood, it's always a mission to catch, clean, and cook them. But at the end of the day, if you're willing to go through the trouble of doing so, it is well worth it.

Two species of mud crabs are found along Australian shores. They can be found along the entire Queensland coast in sheltered estuaries, tidal flats and rivers lined with mangroves. They also inhabit tropical to warm temperate waters from Exmouth Gulf in Western Australia to the Bega River in New South Wales. As a marine and estuarine animal, they're usually found in shallow water, but berried (egg-carrying) females occur well offshore. They favour a soft muddy bottom, often below tide level. The colour of mud crabs varies, from dark olive-brown to greenish-blue and blue-black. Patterns of lighter coloured dots cover their walking legs.



What bait and traps to use

Mud crabs are omnivorous scavengers. They also eat other crabs, bivalves and barnacles. There are a variety of crab traps, in different shapes and sizes, including round, square, pyramid, collapsible and net types which are available from most fishing supply outlets. Dillies and hooks have been banned for catching mud crabs. Almost every pot is now made of string mesh. Which crab pot you choose is up to you and your budget. The cheap rectangular pots are as good as any, but you must check and repair them constantly, as a crab can chew his way out. Crabs like fresh bait, so some crabbers will change bait twice a day. Fresh fish, or frames and heads are excellent, in particular whole mullet (score the flesh down to the bone). Chicken carcass or necks, and kangaroo meat and bones are also good, but the secret is: it has to be FRESH.

Where should I place the pots?

Where you put the pot is the most important part of the mud crab hunt. During heavy rain, or 'the wet' in the tropics, the rivers are high and flossing with freshwater. Crabs cannot survive in fresh-water, so they move out along the shallow coastal flats. That's where you put your pots at that time of the year. But during the dry season (winter) as the salt water intrudes way up the rivers and creeks you follow this salt water intrusion. Also drop your pots in very small creeks and deep gutters as crabs use these as highways into the mangroves.

Be considerate of others using the area, all too often we see pots in the middle of anchorages and channels. This is one sure way to have your pot floats cut purposely or by accident, as they may have caused an emergency situation to another vessel.

Queensland law states you are allowed four pots per person, and 10 male crabs **PER PERSON IN POSSESSION**. It is **NOT** 10 crabs per day. It's illegal to take female crabs in Queensland.

Minimum 'take' size on male mud crabs is 15 cm. There are other rules and regulations for each state so be sure you read up on these.

Safety first

A mud crab has two large, strong claws. They can easily crush a finger, hand or foot should it grab you. If this happens it is best to break off the top or bottom pincer to release the grip. If you pull the entire claw off; the grip will still be in place.

Cleaning

Now that you have caught your mud crab you need to clean it. If you wish to clean them prior to cooking, follow the steps below.



Mud crabbing is fun! Exchange student Emily, from the USA.

You can always clean them after cooking, if you prefer this method jump to the cooking steps.

Cleaning 'muddies' is quite easy. Pull the tail up and with your thumbs under the tail push forward separating the shell from the carapace. Continue to push forward to remove the shell from the carapace.

Using both hands, hold either side of the crab and fold it in half downwards to break the underside. Place on the edge of something sharp and break the body in half.

Once the crab is in two, clean the inside removing the gills and organs. After the crab is cleaned it is ready to be cooked and eaten.

BELOW: Female mud crabs must be released.



Cooking mud crabs

Wash the mud crabs thoroughly. Place live green mud crabs into ice slurry for 35 minutes in a container or bin, or in the freezer for 35 minutes. This puts them to sleep.

Bring a pot of water to the boil, include a handful of salt. Place mud crabs in the pot. Bring to the boil again and then cook for 22 minutes.

In another container or bin add another three handfuls of salt to the ice slurry.

Once cooked, place mud crabs into this and when cool, clean them in the slurry water. This way the salt flavour stays within the mud crab. With a firm grip, pull the tail up and with your thumbs under the tail push forward separating the shell from the carapace.

With both hands, grab either side of the crab holding tight the claws and fold the crab in half downwards to break the underside. Once the crab is in two, clean the inside removing the gills and organs.

Mud crabs are delicious. If you haven't caught mud crabs before, I suggest you find some pots and give it a go, one taste and you'll want more!

The following are a couple of our favourite recipes that we cook in Our Galley on *Our Dreamtime*.

(Reference: <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/fisheries>)



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Crab Cakes with Saffron Mayonnaise

Ingredients:

1/2 cup whole egg mayonnaise
1 large egg, beaten
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1/4 tsp of dried tarragon
1/4 cup of Italian parsley chopped finely
2 large potatoes diced and cooked but still firm
2 cups of cooked crab meat
1 lemon juiced and finely zest
1 tbsp of garlic diced finely
2 cups of Panko crumbs plus extra to roll
1/4 cup canola oil for shallow frying
Lemon wedges, for serving

Saffron Mayonnaise:

1 cup of whole egg mayonnaise
1/2 tbsp of saffron threads soaked in 1 tbsp of white wine vinegar overnight

Let's get Cooking

In a bowl, whisk the mayonnaise with the egg, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and tarragon until smooth. Add the parsley, lemon juice, zest and garlic and fold together.

Boil the potatoes until just cooked. Mash, leaving small lumps.

In a bowl, toss the crab meat with the Panko crumbs. Gently fold in the mayonnaise mixture. And then add the warm potatoes. Note: potatoes need to be still warm, so the starches hold the cakes together. Cover and refrigerate



for at least 1 hour.

Scoop the crab mixture into eight 1/3-cup balls, roll in extra Panko crumbs, lightly part into 8 patties shapes about 1 1/2 inches thick.

In a large skillet, heat the oil until shimmering.

Add the crab cakes and cook over moderately high heat until deeply golden and heated through, about 3 minutes per side.

Transfer the crab cakes to an oven proof plate and bake at 180°C for 20 minutes.

Saffron Mayonnaise:

Combine the saffron threads and vinegar together and leave to dilute overnight.

Combine saffron mixture and mayonnaise cover and refrigerate until required.

To serve

Once crab cakes are cooked transfer to plates and serve with saffron mayonnaise, lemon wedges and your choice of salad.

Crab Linguine

Ingredients:

350g linguine or pasta of your choice

1 garlic clove

1/2 -1 dried red chilli

2 tbsp of your favourite Italian herb mix

4 tbsp of tomato paste

2 cups of crab meat

3 tbsp lemon olive oil (1 tbsp of lemon added to oil)

1/2 a glass of white wine for you and 1/2 for the recipe

Let's get Cooking

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil, feed in the spaghetti and cook until just soft, stirring a couple of times to stop it sticking.

Peel and finely chop the garlic; halve and finely chop the chilli. Roughly chop the parsley.

Heat 2 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan, add the garlic, Italian herbs and chilli and fry for 1 minute.

Tip the crab meat into the pan with the wine and tomato paste, season with salt and pepper and heat through for a minute or so, stirring.

Drain the pasta, return it to the pan and tip in the crab mixture, the last tablespoon of oil and the parsley. Toss everything together and serve with grated Parmesan, the remainder of the lemon oil parsley and cherry tomatoes.



Karen Oberg shares the helm with her husband on their 42' Ketch *Our Dreamtime*. They have sailed many parts of the world, including Asia and the Mediterranean. She has written four books on Cooking in a Galley and writes two blogs; one on their life aboard and one devoted to her passion for cooking. Karen states, 'We eat very well on *Our Dreamtime* but I'm not about slaving away in the galley for hours to feed the crew. I would rather be sitting with a sundowner in hand with everyone else than spending hours at the stove top. Let me share with you how I go about just that and include plenty of tips and easy recipes all of which I have cooked in our galley.'

www.dreamtimesail.blogspot.com.au/

www.dreamtimesailourgalley.blogspot.com.au/



AWKR



ENTRIES NOW OPEN FOR THE 28th AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S KEELBOAT REGATTA

Entries are now open for the Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta (AWKR), hosted by Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron in St Kilda over the Queen's Birthday weekend in June.

Now approaching its 28th year, the AWKR is a significant event for women's sailing with a clear vision to provide opportunities for all women to explore, participate and thrive at competitive keelboat sailing.

After near perfect conditions last year, interest in this year's event indicates that the regatta will reach its aim of 30 boats competing, including teams from each state and territory in Australia and also from New Zealand.

While the sailing is competitive, the atmosphere of the regatta is extremely social with sponsored BBQ's after racing each day,

as well as a crew dinner and a presentation on the final day.

The AWKR kicks off with a free lecture series at Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron. These lectures are open to everyone and held each Wednesday night in May commencing on the 9th with tips on Downwind Trim by Blake Anderson from Doyle Sails.

The regatta is open to women of all skill levels and experience. Opportunities are available to provide boats for crews, or to place sailors with a team. Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

For more information visit www.awkr.com.au or contact Allicia Rae, RMYS Sailing Coordinator.

Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta

Date: 9-11 June 2018

Contact: Allicia Rae - (03) 9534 0227
awkr@rmys.com.au



“Bring a Truck.
Motivated Seller.
Cash Only.”

TIFFANY BUTLER shares
a humorous tale of down-
sizing in preparation for
cruising.

I share a 1986 Gozzard 36 named *Tara* with my husband and our Australian cattle dog. We're three years into a five-year plan to cut the lines and sail toward Canada, and then decide between a north Atlantic crossing or heading south toward perpetual island time.

I didn't start out as a boat gal. Instead, I filled my spacious apartment with possessions, climbed the corporate ladder, and followed the masses to the high-rise offices of Washington, DC. I'd never been on a sailboat until I met my husband. Prior to that, he'd labored for years to build the perfect American dream. Once he discovered it wasn't his dream he left everything behind, moved onto a pristine 1978 Dufour 32, and started the business that accidentally brought us together. The Dufour seemed tiny to me and smelled faintly of diesel, however the cozy v-berth and the endless evenings in the cockpit altered my dreams from shattering the glass ceiling to dreams of the places a sailboat can take you when the wind fills your sails.

As a couple, we exchanged the Dufour for a catamaran, thus beginning year-one of our five-year plan. We knew the catamaran wasn't our forever boat but she was a perfect right-now boat with a shallow draft for our river. Not yet a sailor, I wondered about keeping my stuff on a boat, about hot showers, and about storing large bags of kale in a tiny boat refrigerator. Five years seemed like a long time and I studied the liveaboard lifestyle as

if it was a National Geographic article about remote native tribes. Sure, it can be done but I have too much stuff and I'll figure it out later.

Further along in our five-year plan we moved into a 500 square foot apartment and the downsizing lightbulb went off. I had sets of rarely-used serving platters, enough towels and linens to start a bed & breakfast, and dozens of once-a-year party dresses; a surplus of belongings that had always been comforting to own but were hardly ever used. In that moment of clarity my perception shifted from stuff-as-comfort to addressing how meaningful and useful those things were in my life.

Shortly after a major parting of ways with endless dresses, bags, boxes, and cartons, I was downsized from my corporate career. During the conversation with my boss I had an unexpected gleeful 'I'm free' moment, complete with inappropriate giggling instead



Tara.

of tears. My husband and I also had a gleeful ‘we’re free’ moment together when I told him about the downsizing; if we had the right blue-water boat to carry us across the ocean, why not cut the lines and leave now?

We immediately put the catamaran on the market, sold it in 16 days, and began combing through boat listings and meeting brokers at far flung marinas on the weekends.

We visited *Tara* as lookie-loos because she was out of our price range but appeared to be our dream boat. Other sailboats we saw seemed to say ‘this vessel is all business in the nautical department’. None felt like home until *Tara*, who’s siren song was clearly ‘welcome home, I have room for your large bags of kale!’ We were lookie-loos no more.

Tara’s vintage brand slogan is something like ‘yachts for two—to go anywhere.’ She features five feet of closet space if you don’t mind accessing the closet by kneeling on your pillow. She has a second saloon that converts into a centerline queen sized bed which I can stand up on, by the way, and storage space that mimics a land home rather than the sailboats with all business in the nautical department interiors.

Shortly after closing on *Tara* the lease expired on our 500 square foot apartment. It took only moments to begin the frantic sprint from land to liveaboard. My previous social media posts had been, *We’re moving aboard in a few years, I was wondering...* and suddenly they

were, *For Sale: almost everything in this apartment, please come get it now. Bring a truck. Motivated seller. Cash only.*

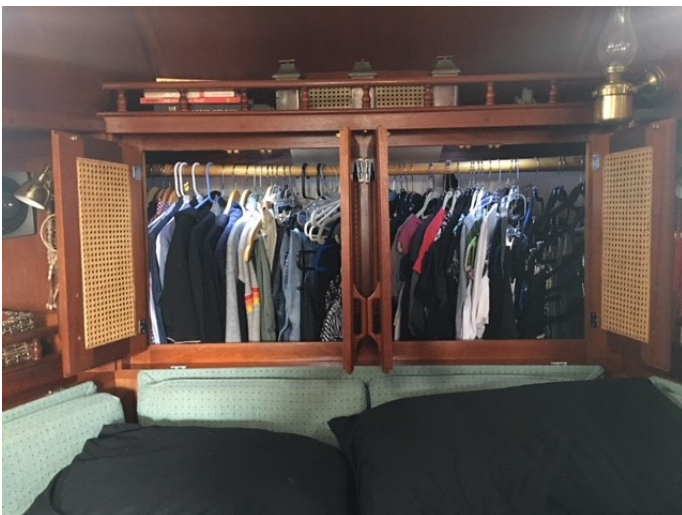
“One of the things I love about liveaboard cruisers is that we all want to know how many squares of toilet paper you use and exactly how you store your macaroni noodles.”

Always a methodical overthinker, I employed particularly scientific methods to calculate my new liveaboard needs. This type of science alternates wine, tears, and insomnia with joy, excitement, and wine. I recreated *Tara*’s closet space on my shower curtain rod, hung up exactly that many of my favorites, and stacked the hangers downwards to create exponentially more space. The shower curtain rod promptly fell off the wall from the weight. I triumphed in the end by not having to repair the rod because we moved and by knowing exactly how much clothing would fit.

The contents of my dresser fitted into three



Recreating *Tara*’s closet space on the shower curtain rod.



measured canvas bins; whatever fitted came aboard and what didn't fit didn't make it. My shoes tuck neatly into two 12 inch square cubes and I'm able to fit many pairs, simply because they fit into a cube. Thank you, excellent organization, copious storage, and small feet! What didn't make it onto the doomed shower curtain rod, the 12 inch cubes, or the myriad measured bins and baskets was tagged, bagged, and donated to a local home for formerly incarcerated women.

We have everything we need and we want for nothing but I do occasionally miss my fancy immersion blender. Just saying. Do we secretly have overflowing cabinets? The answer is no. Jam packed to the gills? Not at all. Ask if we're prioritized, organized, and pared down to the best of our things and all of our favorites and the answer is a confident and assertive yes. *Tara's* liveaboard storage and our solid, thoughtful and prioritized downsizing plan work together seamlessly to create a spacious and comfortable home within our 36 feet. Mindful as ever, our safety gear, tools, and the necessities for life on the sea also have tidy homes aboard.

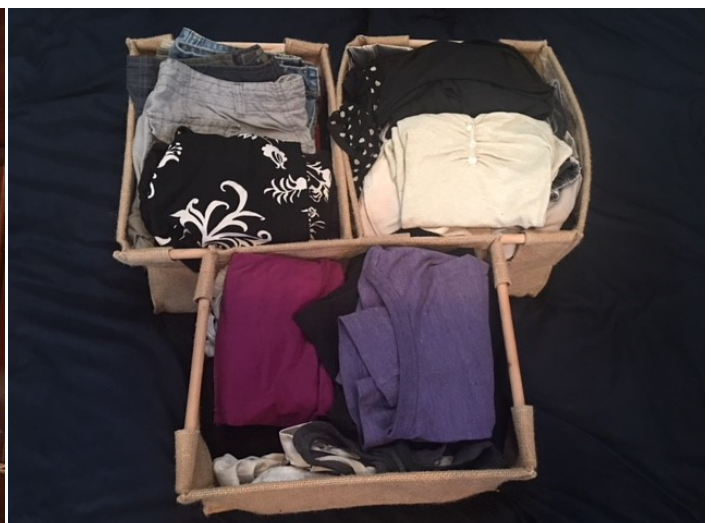
On land my husband and I never said to each other, 'Look how much space we have,' however, as liveaboards we've repeated it many times over like a love note read between us. When you share small spaces with the person you're closest to in all the world and when you can always see every inch of your home, you realize it's not how



little or how much you need to survive, it's about growing, flourishing, and prospering with fewer objects and more adventures, more living, breathing, and experiencing the world without excess baggage, possessions, and stuff to weigh you down. I often think of the old saying, 'It's not getting the things you want, it's wanting the things you've got.' Yes, this is us.

I imagine new and future liveaboards and cruisers much like myself eating up the no frills advice about downsizing for a boat. There's the kitchen box. For a month put everything you use into a large box. In a month, the items inside the box can come aboard and everything else has to go. There's advice about shoes. You'll need only three pairs aboard; one for the boat, one for going into town, and one for marina showers. Brown and quick dry are best.

BELOW: Measured bins and baskets.




Advice about clothing that we should probably all follow. There's boat clothes and land clothes. Don't mix the two. And finally, advice about makeup. Wear sunscreen. Nobody needs makeup on the ocean. Take the advice or leave it; wear your sunscreen or your eyeshadow and pack your brown quick dry shoes that are probably cute and comfy along with your strappy wedge sandals if you have the space.

If you want the items that didn't make it into the kitchen box or extra decorative towels, study your boat ahead of time, pull out your boxed wine and your tape measure, and bring the items that make you feel at home within reason because your home is now a boat.

Seriously. It's not about living with so little that it's a half step above camping, it's about figuring out how to surround yourself with meaningful items that keep you safe, comfortable, and contented in a small space that rocks with the wind and waves, and carries you over the water and far away.

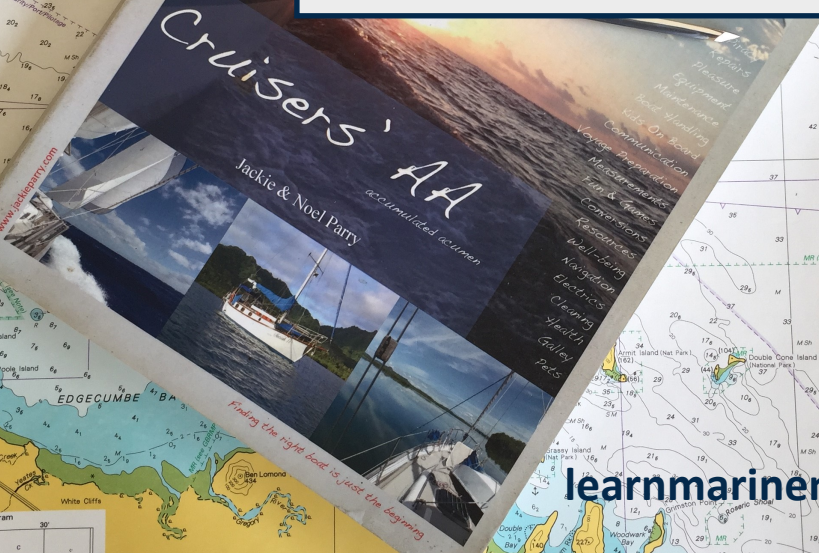


After leaving the corporate world, Tiffany Butler stopped trying to stand in the same line as everyone else, and with her husband and pupper-snapper, they eventually left the herd entirely. As full-time, year-round liveaboards in the US mid-Atlantic, their adventures aboard are usually thoughtful, occasionally amusing, and always found at: <https://thesailboattara.com/>.



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Green on blue

In the first of our regular environment series, LYNNE DORNING SANDS looks at the issue of 'Plastic Proliferation'.

In 2001 we completed and launched our catamaran, and in 2002 we set off from Australia on our, as yet incomplete, circumnavigation. Our first ocean crossing was from Darwin to Dar es Salaam, across the Indian Ocean via Scott Reef, Cocos Keeling, Chagos Archipelago and Mahé in the Seychelles.

It was on Cocos Keeling that we first remarked on the proliferation of thongs (flip flops) on one of the uninhabited beaches. Interestingly, there appeared to only be the left shoe each time. We noticed this as there was quite a rip between two of the islands and the local expatriate community had set a floating rope like an amusement park ride. Before entering the water at the start of the

'ride' you had to clamber across jagged coral rock and the easiest way to do this was by grabbing any thongs within reach, wearing them, as best you could, and then leaving them again at the 'ride' entry. The entry was a knee-deep area where you donned your mask, snorkel and fins, then glided out with the rip over brightly coloured coral teeming with tiny fish until it widened and deepened, offering abundant vistas over more species of coral with larger demersal fish and sharks lurking in the depths. The floating rope offered a security blanket and a route back to shore once you found yourself out in the deeper water.

Our next stop was the Chagos Archipelago and, once again, the main beach trash was thongs and fishing floats. Bear in mind that the nearest inhabited island to Chagos is Gan, the southernmost of the Maldivian island chain, some 300 nautical miles away. From Chagos we crossed to Mahé, in the Seychelles, and on to Dar es Salaam.

We had previously lived and worked in Dar from 1993 to 2000. Our plan was to return to Tanzania with our catamaran to operate a marine consultancy business and low-key charters, which we did from 2002 to 2006.

As far as plastic pollution goes I recall our early days in Dar es Salaam when we went to the market and carried our produce home in natural hand-woven bags made from coconut fronds. Sadly, in the mid-1990s the blue

Plastic is found on many remote islands.





Collecting trash on a tourist island near Suva.



plastic produce bag came into existence in Tanzania and we used to remark on seeing the mangroves with the ubiquitous 'blue flowers' adorning them. In addition, the Pepsi factory moved from recycling glass soda bottles to using the new plastic PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles.

Times were changing and unfortunately, as we are now seeing globally, so was the increase in plastic pollution, as these wonderful First World conveniences were introduced into societies which were, in effect, managing perfectly well without them.

With the increase in plastic pollution along came various aid-funded recycling projects and the trash would be reduced until the project ran out of money and the initiators returned home.

Between 2002 to 2009, when we were based in Tanzania, we cruised north as far as Kiwayu in Kenya, east to the west coast of Madagascar and eventually down the Mozambique coast to South Africa. We have always despaired at seeing trash strewn on deserted beaches and thrown from passing ferries, but one of the most notable items

was a computer monitor on Île du Lys, Îles Glorieuses, an uninhabited island and bird rookery 100 miles north west of Madagascar.

Later, sailing 150 miles off the north coast of Brazil, we were shocked by the amount of trash floating in the flotsam from the Amazon River. As we made our way to the Caribbean, we noticed an increase in plastic bottles and fast food packaging. Most notable was Trinidad, especially in the port of Chaguaramas and, even more shocking, out at the uninhabited island of Chacachacare 10 miles to the west. With the currents, tides and prevailing winds, it is evident that much of this floated in from the large Gulf of Paria which separates Trinidad from Venezuela, just a few miles further west.

The good news is that we did see small boats heading out to Chacachacare from time to time and returning overflowing with black bags full of trash. The small fishing village of Charlotteville, on Trinidad's sister island Tobago, was surprisingly clean and when we commented on this whilst checking in, the



Computer monitor on Île du Lys.

customs officer proudly declared that the town's motto was, 'Clean, Green & Serene', which it was.

During our time in the Caribbean we regularly collected rubbish, disposing of it in bins wherever possible and occasionally burning it, which may not be the most environmentally friendly way to dispose of it, but in some places very few recycling or waste disposal initiatives appeared to be in evidence. Sometimes the Hash House Harriers would do a run on a windward beach in Grenada and collect bags of rubbish as a community service.

Despite all this the proliferation of rubbish has become untenable. The unfortunate part of plastic pollution is that, now, the world can barely keep up with eliminating it efficiently. This is noticeable in countries such as Fiji, where we are currently. With over 300 islands spread out over more than

7,000 square miles, the logistics of managing plastic waste is a huge challenge. Add to this the fact that people are simply unaware, or unconcerned about the impact of their actions on the marine environment.

We are committed to doing what we can to bring attention to this and work with organisations* and create awareness by sharing initiatives that we have come across through research or personal experience.

***see Lynne's blog for a full list.**



Lynne Dorning Sands and her husband, Eric Toyer, have been living aboard their Crowther catamaran SV *Amarula* since they launched her on the Clarence River, Australia, in July 2001. They operated a marine consultancy business and low-key charter business in Tanzania, East Africa, from 2002 to 2006. Since 2006 they have been slowly making their way around the world and are now in Fiji. Lynne's blog can be found at: www.amarulasail.com/



INSV *Tarini* - a Circumnavigation

VIKI MOORE recently caught up with the all-women crew of *INSV Tarini* when they called in to the South Island of New Zealand.

It's not every day that circumnavigating yachts call in to Lyttelton Harbour on their voyage around the globe. It is even more exciting when you hear that the entire six-crew on board are women. But the most remarkable part is that they are all from India. A nation not known for their sailing prowess. In fact, sailing is not even really a hobby, sport or pastime in India.

So how did a group of six young Indian women come to be on a yacht in Lyttelton, New Zealand, part way through the inaugural Indian female circumnavigation of the globe?

'Navika Sagar Parikrama' is the name of this captivating expedition by the Indian Navy, aimed at promoting female empowerment and to instil a spirit of adventure amongst Indian youth. The voyage also aims to research environmentally friendly renewable energy sources, promote India's boat building skills on the world stage, and to network with the local and Indian communities in their four ports of call.

After reading about their upcoming voyage, I followed their progress closely as they

departed Goa in September 2017 gradually making their way across the Equator towards Fremantle. Their yacht *INSV Tarini* * (meaning 'Goddess') is a new 56' Van de Stadt design yacht, purpose built in Goa for their voyage and launched earlier in 2017.

Four-thousand-eight hundred nautical miles and 43 days after leaving Goa they arrived in Fremantle, Australia to a welcoming crowd of the Indian expat community and local dignitaries. Following a two-week whirlwind of various official engagements, and re-provisioning the boat for the next leg of the voyage, they set off into the Southern Ocean heading for New Zealand.

The crew trained extensively for the voyage after being hand-picked from about 20 Naval women who were interested in taking part. Some of the team hadn't even seen the sea before joining the Navy! They qualified in various Naval professions such as engineering, air traffic control, education and Naval architecture, before learning to sail.

The training for their voyage included sailing to Mauritius, around the coast of India, and to Cape Town and back, learning all about offshore passage making, the systems on board their boat and every other aspect required for a circumnavigation.

They were blessed with calm weather as they made their way along the southern coast of Australia, passing below Tasmania, across the Tasman Sea, past Stewart Island and up the east coast of the South Island, before finally arriving in Lyttelton just over three weeks later.

I was desperate to meet them and welcome them to Lyttelton, and it seemed like there were lots of other people keen to do the same. Liaising with the local Indian community coordinator, I managed to secure a time in their busy schedule for them to come along to talk to the Little Ship Club of Canterbury members.

I was nervous. I'd never hosted the Navy before! There had been a fire in the club kitchen a few weeks earlier and all the carpet had been ripped up. The whole place was looking very scruffy; however a large crowd of members arrived to welcome our guests and learn more about their voyage.

The crew of six is made up of Lieutenant Commanders Vartika Joshi, Pratibha Jamwal, Swathi Patharlapaali, and Lieutenants Vijaya Shougrakpam, Aishwarya Boddapati and Payal Gupta. The great thing about sailors from anywhere on the globe is that we all have a common bond, and within no time the *Tarini* crew were mingling with the locals and all talking like old friends.

Skipper, Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi gave a presentation about their passage to date and showed some photos and videos of their voyage. Then the local yachties asked lots of questions and we all had a wonderful night chatting, sharing stories, learning more about each other's culture, and getting to know this group of young, vibrant and adventurous women.

They were presented with a Little Ship Club Burgee and a Women Who Sail NZ Burgee as a memento of their visit.

Tarini required a few minor repairs to sails and stainless fittings so we put them in touch with locals able to assist with the jobs required. I went along to help and to check out *Tarini*, holding nuts and bolts and watching as Vartika balanced precariously on the stern while she skilfully dismantled and reassembled the emergency steering system.

Tarini felt like a very solid, spacious boat, extremely different to the slightly larger Vendee Globe race boat I'd been on a couple of weeks previously. A large open plan galley area, navigation station, plenty of storage and bunks for four (with the other two crew always on watch), lots of safety equipment, a watermaker, small motor and a cosy covered cockpit area to protect the crew from the elements.

While they waited for a suitable weather window, the crew got to experience some of the local sights and attractions in Christchurch. I entertained at my place, showing them the typical kiwi way of life – although I must admit I bought vegetarian Indian takeaways for dinner, not backing



myself to be able to cook anything that adventurous at short notice!

Their next stop was Stanley in the Falkland Islands, so I was keen to introduce them to my friends Chris and Paula who had recently sailed to New Zealand from the Falklands. Once again, we all chatted for ages, with Chris and Paula providing all sorts of interesting information and contacts for their next port of call.

All too soon it was time for their voyage to continue with the most daunting leg ahead, 40-plus days battling the elements in the Southern Ocean and around Cape Horn. It was a gloomy grey day as they cast off and headed out the harbour. I was sad to see them go, but there were promises all round to keep in touch and visit New Zealand again one day. As many sailors find, during a short period of time, strong friendships are formed. Vartika gave me a lovely *Tarini* anchor memento which I will cherish.

Their trip across the Southern Ocean started off with light winds and slow progress, however they saw lots of wildlife including a large, floating, dead whale – which they thankfully didn't hit in the night, gosh imagine that! They turned further south hoping to pick up the westerlies that roar around the Southern Ocean to carry them on to their next destination.

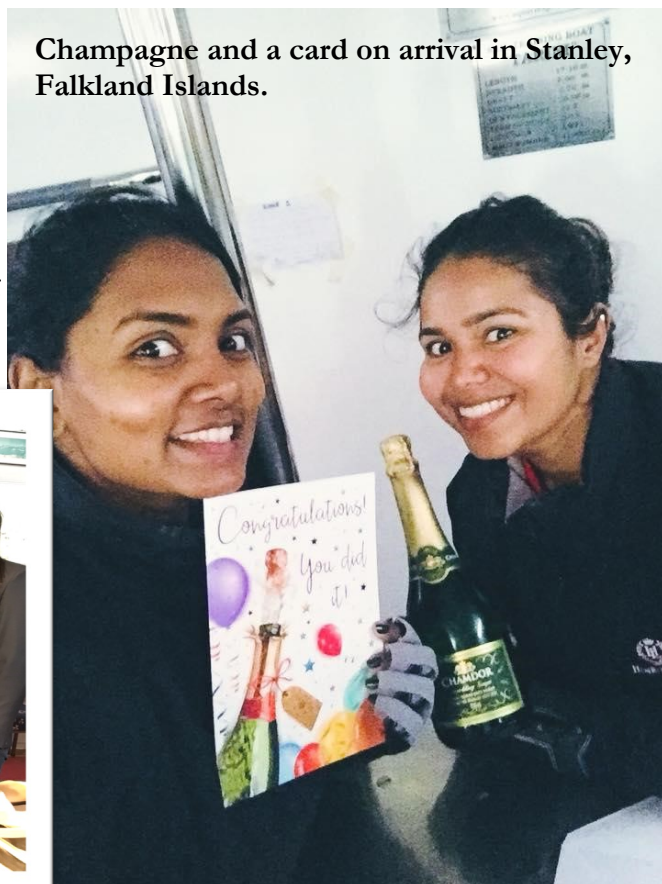
BELOW: The crew of *Tarini* with Viki Moore being presented with a Little Ship Club and Women Who Sail NZ Burgee.



Christmas Day at sea provided another opportunity for a celebration. In fact, one of the crew remarked that they like to celebrate everything on board, including their numerous crossings of the Equator thanks to the fickle winds and currents they experienced on the first leg of their voyage.

Eventually they did find the wind, and plenty of it. *Tarini* safely carried them through an intense storm with over 70 knots of wind and huge seas. A test for both the boat and the crew who all passed with flying colours.

Champagne and a card on arrival in Stanley, Falkland Islands.



Finally, after about 40 days at sea they reached Cape Horn, often referred to as the 'Mount Everest of Sailing' (in fact it's believed more people have climbed Mount Everest than sailed around Cape Horn). Whether that is true or not, the landmark denotes a point of unforgiving waters, strong currents, steep waves, howling winds and evokes fear and respect from all mariners. This milestone marked a fantastic achievement for these incredible young women so far from home.

As I write, *Tarini* is now enjoying exploring the Falkland Islands and has been welcomed by the local sailing community. We even managed to arrange delivery of a card and bottle of champagne to them by some local yachties to congratulate them on their safe arrival.

The next part of their voyage will take them from the Falklands to Cape Town for their final stopover before returning to India around April 2018. I wish them all the best for the rest of their voyage. They will return to India knowing they have achieved something that no other Indian woman has ever done before. They have inspired the youth in their country, touched the hearts of many, and made good friends all over the globe.

You can follow the rest of their adventures on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/sagarparikrama/>

Or read their blog here: <http://parikrama123.blogspot.co.nz/2017/>



ABOVE: Vartika and Anders fixing the self-steering gear.

*** Indian Naval Sailing Vessel**



Currently
based in

Lyttelton NZ, Viki enjoys racing and cruising her Young 88. She is on the board of Yachting New Zealand and is the President of the Little Ship Club of Canterbury. She blogs about her adventures at

www.astrolabesailing.com

www.sistershipmagazine.com



Getting the Good Oil on Engines

CHERYLLE STONE reports from a diesel maintenance course in Sydney, Australia.

I recently attended a diesel maintenance workshop hosted by Fenquin Pty Ltd, a Volvo and Vetus distributor located in South Western Sydney. It was organised for members of the Coastal Cruising Club of Australia. The 20 or so attendees were segregated into male and female groups. The promise was that we could ask anything we liked, and we could start at the most basic level with our exploration of the mysteries of diesel engines and their related propulsion systems. Fenquin staff went above and beyond to accommodate us.

As I stood looking at the little green Volvo 13 horsepower engine and listening to Company Director, Martin Quintano, speak about its needs for an electronic kick start, air, water, oil, diesel, regular cleaning inside and out and careful monitoring, I realised

why mechanics often refer to their charges in human terms. It is a living breathing entity needing regular nourishment and a means to excrete its wastes.

Martin began by pointing out and naming the components of the engine and how each related to the others. As he went, he gave clues about useful tools, equipment and techniques for ensuring a happy well-functioning engine. In talking about removing and reattaching hose clamps he suggested we purchase two hose clamp tools from SuperCheap Auto which are flexible, make it easier to get into tight spaces and fit all sized clamps, unlike a screwdriver which may not comply with all those criteria. Another essential piece of equipment is the oil extractor kit which can be vacuum or manually operated and which will safely contain all the old oil to be taken ashore.

Water pumps are a bugbear, especially if the impellor fails. A large open pump with the impellor inserted was available for all to

explore. Martin's advice was to take photos of everything as you disassemble it so that you know how it goes back together. The impellor and its casing require silicon grease to lubricate and ensure that when the engine is started for the first time after a service, friction caused by dryness does not damage the impellor. If it is well lubricated and you happen to insert it with the vanes bent the wrong way, it will probably survive having to turn itself around.

“I realised why mechanics often refer to their charges in human terms. It is a living breathing entity needing regular nourishment and a means to excrete its wastes.”

At the end of the hour-and-a-half session the women's group were able to identify all the engine components; had a few clues about the water, air, electrical and fuel systems; understood the differences between green and yellow coolant; and knew that our engines will respond very positively to a service, including new oil and impellers, every 100 hours or once a year (depending on use, manufacturer, brand etc, refer to the owner's manual). We all know where the dip

stick is and how to use it and its little mate in the sail drive to check oil levels. We were also reassured that diesels like to work hard and should be run at their optimum revs regularly if they are to retain their efficiency and not become sooted up by underwork. Now that's also a human trait. Our arteries are less likely to be clogged and our brains less addled if we have proper, regular exercise.

There are a number of other maintenance issues to keep an eye on. These include monitoring the exhaust fitting which, over time, will carbon up and become blocked. The tell-tale sign is an encrustation around the joint. That was a major issue on my boat many years ago when we arrived in Gove. In those days I was carefree crew, not the responsible skipper. I recall my late husband using colourful language when he realised the 'boot' had blown off and why. He took the offending part ashore along with hydrochloric acid and soaked the exhaust thingy in a mix of acid and water until all the gunk and rust had been cleared, replaced the exhaust fitting, hoses and boots and away we went.

The second segment of our day at Fenquins involved exploring some Vetus products including oil and fuel filter kits; options for preventing water backwashing into the



engine; and the essential spares that should be carried, e.g. fuel and oil filters, belts, impellers, spare oil, hose, clamps and coolant and a can of pressurised air to clear the dust.



ABOVE: Waste water systems.

LEFT: Water pump mysteries explained.

experience mechanics are only too happy to oblige.

It was emphasised several times during the day that it is important to keep your engine and its surrounds very clean so that you can detect any new blemishes of dust, oil, grease or corrosion which are clear signals that something needs fixing.

No day relating to boats would be complete unless it also included a reference to toilets. Vetus manufactures a range of holding tanks and toilets. Along the way we also saw a new type of through-hull fitting and some very attractive anchor winches.

This day at Fenquins was a valuable one for me. While I had completed a similar course five years ago, I am about to have new engines installed in my catamaran and, for the first time since I transitioned from being a wife to a widow six years ago, I am venturing beyond the Australian East coast, with its closely spaced and readily available services and parts, to New Caledonia and Vanuatu where those items can be scarce, particularly in Vanuatu. There, one must be self-reliant.

I recommend that a good next-step after attending a similar course is to line up a mechanic for your engine service and advise him or her that you will be paying to learn to do it yourself under their supervision. In my

I took home a Vetus Boat Systems catalogue and Volvo Accessories and Maintenance Parts catalogue and a lot more confidence to maintain and fault find when my engines decide to whinge at me.

Cherylle hails from Port Stephens on the east coast of Australia and has sailed a variety of boats for 45 years in Australia and the South West Pacific mostly as carefree crew but in the past six years, since her beloved husband died, as responsible skipper. *Subzero* is a Grainger 12.5 metre catamaran which she cruises for half the year and races locally during summer.



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Get Gutsy with Lyndy Atkinson

Racing from Melbourne to Osaka ~ 2018

GEORGIE MITCHELL introduces the logistics of the Osaka Cup and the women who are taking part in the 2018 event (which is underway at the time of writing).

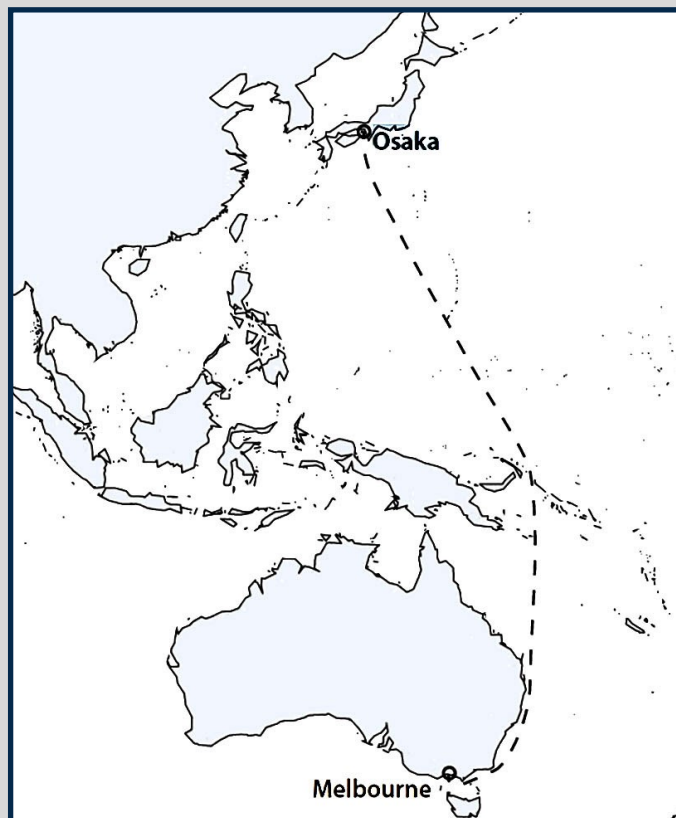
The Osaka Cup double handed yacht race is held every four years and is organised through the collaborative effort of three yacht clubs: the Sandringham Yacht Club (SYC) and the Ocean Racing Club Victoria (ORCV), both based in Melbourne, Australia, and the Hokko Yacht Club (OHYC), Osaka, Japan.

The Osaka Cup is a 5,500 nautical mile 2-handed yacht race starting in Melbourne and finishing in Osaka and one of the only south-north long distance ocean races in the world. The route passes through multiple weather systems and seasons as it crosses the Pacific Ocean.

Three women co-skippers are taking part in the 2018 Osaka Cup.

Jo Breen

Morning Star, a S&S 34, hails from the Tamar Yacht Club (TYC) where Jo Breen is the current Vice Commodore. Jo has a RYA Yachtmaster Offshore certificate and works for TYC as a dinghy and keel-boat instructor. She also works part time as a delivery skipper.



Jo has clocked up over 30,000 nm including a solo delivery of a 28' yacht from the Azores to the UK, multiple transatlantics and a transpacific crossing. Jo also spent a season working on Skip Novak's expedition yacht *Pelagic* sailing around Cape Horn, the Falkland Islands and circumnavigating South Georgia. According to Jo, 'Sailing in the high latitudes around ice was a great learning experience, and a true heavy weather sailing education.' Jo has competed in the Launceston to Hobart, Maria Island Race, and 2016 Sydney to Hobart as the navigator on *Cromarty Magellan*, winning the Corinthian Division of the race.

Jo is racing with co-skipper Peter Brooks, a member of Port Dalrymple Yacht club at Beauty Point Tasmania.

Sue Bumstead

Sue Bumstead is a marine trimmer by trade, mother of four and is well loved by everyone in the sailing community. Sue has time for everybody and never lets a moment to go



sailing go by. Having covered every position on the boat from foredeck to skipper, and everything in between, Sue is a capable sailor. With a lifetime passion to live and sail the world, the Osaka race is only the start for Sue. *Blue Water Tracks* (formally *TryBooking.com*), is a Moody 54 Deck Saloon, owned by Grant Dunoon, Sue's co-skipper.

Annette Hesselmanns

Annette watched the start of the 1987 Melbourne Osaka Cup as a sailing obsessed 17-year-old and so it is with great excitement that she is now participating. Annette has many years of experience racing, delivering and cruising. Annette particularly wants to use the opportunity to encourage her children and other female sailors to take up the sport and strive to achieve. Annette was originally competing with her brother, Andrew, however he has unfortunately pulled out this week. Annette will now travel with her

husband and best mate Gerry. *Red Jacket* is a Radford designed 12.2 metre yacht named after the clipper sailing ship which broke many passage speed records in the 1860s and was one of the fastest ships of its time.

The Osaka Cup has a staggered start to allow the boats to arrive in Japan at approximately the same time. Jo departed Port Phillip Bay on March 15th with Sue and Annette to follow on March 25th.

GEORGIE MITCHELL hails from Victoria, Australia, and will be heading to Japan to provide updates as the race concludes.



THE MAIDEN FACTOR

New skipper revealed for the iconic yacht *Maiden's* next voyage

London, 14 March 2017 – *Maiden*, the yacht that made history with the first all-female crew to sail the Whitbread Round the World Race in 1990, has a new skipper who will take her on 'The Maiden Factor' three-year world tour in support of promoting and raising money for girls' education worldwide.

Tracy Edwards MBE, the first woman in 32 years to win the Yachtsman of the Year Award in 1989 for her record-breaking successes with *Maiden* will hand over the skipper role to Susan Glenny, a professional yachswoman, transatlantic race skipper and director of Tigress Sport, who at the age of 13, was inspired by Tracy's achievements in the Whitbread to pursue a career in sailing.

Following a sailing holiday in Athens, Susan developed her sailing qualifications and after a few years in the corporate world started a female race team 'The Sirens' and went on to lead team @TheSirensRacing that opens up competitive yacht racing to less experienced sailors. She is a commercial Ocean Yachtmaster and has skippered three transatlantic races; four Fastnet races and two

Caribbean 600's, as well as many inshore regattas all over the world.

Announcing Susan's new role on *Maiden*, Tracy Edwards MBE said, 'I am delighted to be passing on the role of Skipper to Susan, I know that *Maiden* will be in safe hands. Susan was inspired by *Maiden* to believe she could reach her dream and now, in charge of *Maiden*, she will be inspiring others with 'The Maiden Factor's goal to unlock the potential of millions of girls worldwide through education.'

'This will be Susan's first circumnavigation and talking about her new role on *Maiden* she said, 'I cannot think of a more poignant and legendary boat to take the skipper role on; to take over this responsibility from Tracy, who was incredibly inspirational to me when I was a youngster, really proves that 'anything is possible'.'

With Susan onboard as *Maiden's* new skipper, the search for the permanent female crew members has started. Interviews for Watch Leaders will take place in March 2018 and over and above proven offshore experience and commercial ocean yachtmaster qualifications, attitude and other skills are just as important for this unique sailing experience. Over the next few months Tracy will also be working with The Magenta Project to source female sailors for crew

places over *Maiden's* three-year world tour.

All interested sailors can send an application letter together with a CV to info@themaidentfactor.org.

Tracy has inspired a generation and continues to fight for gender equality and the rights of women and girls. After *Maiden* was rescued and returned to the UK in April 2017, she founded The Maiden Factor, a not-for-profit organisation working with and fundraising for partner charities that help provide girls – currently denied this basic human right – access to or to further their education.

For further information please contact:

Libby Mudditt:

libby@themaidentfactor.org

+44 (0)7769 707041



Tracey Edwards MBE and Susan Glenny.



On the horizon

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S KEELBOAT REGATTA (AWKR) is embarking on its 28th year over the Queen's Birthday long weekend in June 2018. Regularly welcoming over 200 competitors and supporters from across Australia and New Zealand, the AWKR has grown to become Australia's premier women's only sailing event.

The AWKR is a notoriously fun, often cold and always competitive regatta and we would love to have you on board. If you need help finding a boat to borrow, putting together a team or you'd like more information please contact RMYS Sailing Coordinator Allicia Rae via email to awkr@rmys.com.au or check out our website www.awkr.com.au

GLOUCESTER SCHOONER FESTIVAL Aug 31 - Sept 3, 2018 (USA)

Any Women Who Sail Schooners out there? If you live anywhere near Gloucester MA, consider the 34th Annual Gloucester Schooner Festival on Labor Day weekend. (See www.gloucesterschoonerfestival.net). This year we will offer a new prize category for Women at the Wheel, which will honor our women schooner skippers. Most of the race awards go to the boats, but we want to recognize Seawomanship!

SAILING CAMP FOR WOMEN (USA)

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<http://www.houstonyachtclub.com/.../WindwardBound.aspx>



Let us know about your upcoming events: editor@sistershipmagazine.com

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