

March/April 2021



Beautiful  
Port Stephens

**Birthday Issue!**

***RUBY ROSE***

An interview with  
**Terysa  
Vanderloo**

In the Boatyard

- Slipping a Barge Boat
- Mast Coin Tradition
- Staying Sustainable in the Yard

**KAYAKING THE ROUGH STUFF**

*Sailing Nakama*

**PLUS Dogs Who Sail, Windsurfing, and much more!**



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**COVER: Terysa Vanderloo, *Sailing Ruby Rose*.**

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# The bowsprit

From the editor



## Birthdays and boatyards...

It's our birthdays! Birthdays? No, that's not a typo.

*SisterShip Magazine* was first launched in April 1988 and then relaunched in April 2018 — so that makes us 33, and also three!

A lot of water has flowed under the keel since *SisterShip* left drydock and began this journey. A talented crew of contributors has joined the voyage, some for a leg or two, others staying on as part of the regular team. Our 'flat bottomed girl', barge boater Valerie Poore, has been with us for every issue!

In 2018, as we prepared to 'splash' the new *SisterShip*, cruising cartoonist Sarah Steenland created a 'toon for us. In honour of our third birthday and to celebrate our journey so far, Sarah has created a new 'toon for us. Can you identify some of the crew on Page 4?

This issue has quite a boatyard theme. Val Poore explains what's involved in maintaining a 123-year-old barge boat, and Heather Francis considers whether it's possible to be a sustainable sailor at haul out time. We look at the tradition of a coin under the mast and include a poem from a boatyard.

It's not all hard work from the yard though! We chat to YouTubers Terysa Vanderloo and Sophie Snijders, and meet a very cute dog who sails. Sonia Robinson looks at buying and selling boats on the 'COVID wave' while Lyn Battle tackles waves of a different sort — on her kayak!

Wherever you are on this blue planet, stay safe and, as always, look for the dolphin!

*Shelley Wright*







Our *SisterShip* journey continues...





Congratulations on creating a magazine that is being talked about. Your articles definitely encourage women who are interested in sailing and enjoying the sea. Keep up the good work.

**Lin Pardey**

Congratulations on three wonderful years since the launch of the new *SisterShip Magazine*. It's been both a pleasure and an honour to contribute to the magazine, if only in a small way. I look forward to many more inspiring and informative issues to come!

**Erin Carey**

**Roam Generation**

A very happy birthday to *Sistership*. There's nothing like a place dedicated to telling the stories of women on the water. Thanks for all you do!

**Charlotte Kaufman**

**Founder, Women Who Sail**

As they say a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor and I am pretty sure the same applies to publishers of sailing magazines!

Congratulations on staying afloat during what I am sure has been three years of crests and troughs!

May the next three years bring a well deserved reward for your tenacity and vision.

**John and Leanne Hembrow**

**Down Under Rally / Yoga 4 Yachties**

It has been wonderful to follow the journey of the *SisterShip Magazine* and all her editors, contributors, and readers. I am very proud of the work you all do and wish you all the best for your third birthday. Magazines like these are a rarity and we are so lucky that Ruth founded the magazine and that Shelley and the team have continued telling the wonderful stories of women on the high sea.

**Lisa Blair**

***SisterShip* Magazine cruises along with an international flavour.**

**Our contributors hail from all around 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. We 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.**







# Interview With Terysa Vanderloo of *Sailing Ruby Rose*

By Erin Carey

I had the pleasure of sitting down with good friend and fellow sailor, Terysa Vanderloo of *Sailing Ruby Rose*, to learn how the ocean has changed her, how the pandemic has affected her, and how her past has shaped her. Together with her fiancé Nick, Terysa has created one of the most popular sailing YouTube channels in the world, and she has some exciting plans for 2021 and beyond — including an incredibly drool-worthy new boat! So, grab a coffee, find a cozy nook, and read on for an insight into her life behind the camera.

**What three words best describe you?**

Determined, level-headed, positive.

**What is something that most people wouldn't know about you?**

I'm a massive book nerd. I love reading Sci Fi and Fantasy in particular, with a smattering of horror and historical fiction.

**When did you discover a love for sailing and the water?**

I've always loved being on or in the water. I

grew up with a father who is obsessed with surfing, so my childhood was spent on the beach, playing in the waves. When I was 12, I went on a sailing boat for the first time and loved it! Much later, when I was in my early 20s, I met Nick and started sailing with him on the weekends. I was very comfortable on board from the beginning, and I was soon in love with the idea of living on a boat full time and spending all my time on the water.

**You run one of the top sailing YouTube channels in the world. What is your secret for success?**

I love stories — that's why I love reading books so much. Creating videos is just a form of storytelling for me, and I love the process of sharing our lives with others through the medium of film. We've always focussed on creating videos that are high quality, enjoyable to watch, and informative for our audience. We try to provide genuinely useful information as well as a glimpse into the realities of life on board. We don't sugar coat anything — when things are hard, we show that on film. Living on a boat isn't always easy (in fact, it's almost always difficult or



challenging in some way) and we are committed to showing both the highs and the lows. I think people appreciate that candidness.

**You've recently teamed up with Seawind Catamarans, helping to design a custom 45-foot catamaran. Why did you decide to move from a monohull to a catamaran?**

We bought *Ruby Rose*, a Southerly 38 monohull, back in 2012 and then set off to go cruising full-time in 2015. We loved our 38-foot monohull, and we sailed her from Europe to the Caribbean, the US, and the Bahamas. At this point we'd been living on her for three years and realised that there were some inherent drawbacks to living and cruising on a 38-foot monohull, particularly because we wanted to enter the Pacific and cruise more remote islands and countries. The main issues were lack of storage space as well as being a slower boat due to our waterline length. So, we decided to start the search for *Ruby Rose 2*.

We did consider going to a larger monohull, but we eventually agreed that a catamaran

would suit our needs better. We wanted to have more interior space, but also, we loved the idea of having a living area (the galley and saloon) above the waterline, so we could have a closer relationship with our environment, which can be challenging when 'down below' on a monohull.

We knew that if we chose a performance catamaran, we could have a faster sailing experience, which would have many benefits when doing offshore passages as well as coastal sailing. We also knew that we spend about 90% of our time at anchor or docked up and only 10% underway, so it made sense to us to prioritise the features that would make our time at anchor more enjoyable, such as a larger cockpit and a stable platform. Frankly, we just liked the idea of trying out another form of liveaboard cruising that would come with a change of vessel type!

**What design feature are you most excited about in regard to your new Seawind Catamaran?**

Where to begin! We're excited about a lot of aspects of our new Seawind 1370. The



*Ruby Rose.*



potential sailing speeds are very exciting – the polar diagrams suggest that we could reach 20 knots of boat speed in windy off the beam conditions. However, there's no doubt that our passages will be a lot faster. We're also looking forward to being more self-sufficient and have that storage space to spend more time at anchor and in remote parts of the world without having to regularly access services and facilities. We'll have plenty of solar and lithium, which will cover all our power requirements. We'll have some modern conveniences for the first time, such as a washing machine and air conditioning, which will make life onboard easier and more comfortable. We'll also have three cabins and two heads/shower rooms, which will make it easier to have guests and crew onboard.

### **What is it about the deep blue ocean that makes you want to share that with others?**

Being out on your own in the middle of the ocean is a magical feeling! It's not easy to find that isolation and pure wildness on land, but when you're on your own boat, which is also your home, and you are sailing with no sight of land, it's a truly special experience. The



remoteness, the wildness, and the knowledge that you're very much on your own is unlike any other experience I've had. I just love it!

**You've sailed 30,000 nautical miles and**



Terysa and Nick.



### visited 20 countries. What were your top three destinations?

This is such a tough one because every place we visit has something special to offer. However, I have to say that France is definitely in the top three, it has so much to offer sailors, from the Mediterranean to the stunning Brittany coastline on the Atlantic side, not to mention the French canals that connect the two. Plus, the food and wine are second to none! We also loved the Bahamas, again because of how unique they are as a cruising ground. Some islands were completely wild and deserted, and you felt totally isolated. Others were very popular, and it gave us an opportunity to meet other cruisers. Finally, Morocco was a real treat, and totally unexpected. We spent three weeks cruising the Moroccan coastline back in 2015 and it was so memorable. We hope to return one day.

### What obstacles/adversities/hardships have you faced to get where you are today?

Every sailor faces obstacles – it's part of the experience. If you want to live aboard your boat and cruise full-time, those obstacles start mounting pretty drastically. Just the very nature of liveaboard life can be full of

hardships and difficulties. It's not an easy lifestyle! (Well worth it though, obviously). I honestly think the main obstacles are internal – it takes a lot of inner conviction and courage to give up your land-based life and move onto a boat to go sailing the world. You leave your home, your family, your job, your friends, your hobbies. Everything that is familiar and comfortable is sacrificed so you can fulfill a dream of living on a boat – which, by the way, you probably aren't 100% sure if you'll even enjoy. The reality can be very different to the dream. We've done some crazy things since we left – ocean crossings, transiting the French canals – but nothing required so much determination and conviction as the decision to leave in the first place.

### How did the pandemic affect your business and plans for the future?

First, we've been very lucky. A lot of people lost their livelihoods completely during the pandemic, and we're grateful that our business has weathered the pandemic reasonably well. That said, we did have some challenges to face that were unique to YouTube sailing channels (and we're definitely not the only ones who had to deal with these issues). Primarily, this has not been an easy time to be sailing and cruising,





particularly between countries. We struggled to get back to our boat in 2020, and when we did finally return, we were only able to spend three months onboard before needing to sell and move off *Ruby Rose*.

Ordinarily we would have found another form of sailing content to create – perhaps charter or go to boat shows – but it was impossible in that environment. So, we’ve struggled to create enough content to release weekly videos that involve sailing. We’ve managed, but it’s been difficult. Secondly, we rely heavily on Patreon for our income and because so many others have been adversely affected financially by the pandemic, we’ve not seen much growth on that front. Thirdly, we’re not currently releasing content that feels very relevant to many people in lockdown (again, this is not unique to just our channel) so we’re not seeing the growth on our YouTube channel either.

That said, we’ve weathered the pandemic fairly well overall, despite not having a boat for most of it, and we’ve got some really exciting plans for 2021 now that we’re in Australia, so we’re hopeful for the future as the world slowly recovers. We hope that we’ll still be able to take delivery of *Ruby Rose 2* in

December as planned but we’re remaining flexible.

**You’ve been nomadic for the last six years now, do you ever feel like you’d like to settle down?**

We will always want to spend our time on a boat – that’s never going to change. We do miss being with our families and friends, so in the future we’d love to spend more time with them, but that doesn’t mean we’d ever settle down and live full time on land. I can’t see that ever happening! But who knows what the future will bring, one thing this past 12 months has taught us is that we should enjoy the now rather than try and plan the future.

**What is the greatest lesson you’ve learnt since living on the water?**

Trust your instincts and trust what you know. It’s easy to be swayed by other people’s opinions but you need to back yourself and have confidence in your own abilities. This is as true for sailing as for any other aspect of life!

**What are your hobbies, what lights you up?**



Terry and Nick.



I love travelling and exploring new places! The thrill of arriving in a new country – particularly when arriving by sea – never gets old. I loved traveling well before I fell in love with sailing, and that is one of my greatest passions. I also love reading and writing, enjoying a cold beer with my family and friends, and skiing in the winter. If we weren't sailing so much, we'd be skiing a lot more, but they're two hobbies that are generally difficult to combine.

### **What advice would you give your 12-year-old self?**

To be ambitious, dream big, and have faith in yourself that you'll get there.

### **What are your top tips for women who want to follow in your footsteps?**

Educate yourself, either online or by doing practical courses, and build up your confidence by sailing with people other than your significant other (who may or may not be the best teacher!). It's really no different for men or women – if you have the passion, then get on with it and do it. Don't let



anything stop you, least of all your own doubts or anxieties. We all have those. But we can't let them stop us from doing the things in life that we want.

### **How has sailing changed your life?**

From a personal perspective, it's given me more confidence and a more varied perspective. I've met so many people, from different walks of life, with different views and beliefs, backgrounds and cultures. From





a career perspective, well, I used to be a paramedic and now I'm a YouTube content creator so you can't get two more different career paths!

To follow Terysa check out her YouTube channel [Sailing Ruby Rose](#)

Website: <http://www.yachtrubyrose.com>

Patreon: <http://www.patreon.com/yachtrubyrose>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/yachtrubyrose>

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**Erin Carey is the founder of Roam Generation, a PR and communications agency focusing on helping adventurers, travel professionals, and marine brands and experts, share their unique and inspiring story with the world.**

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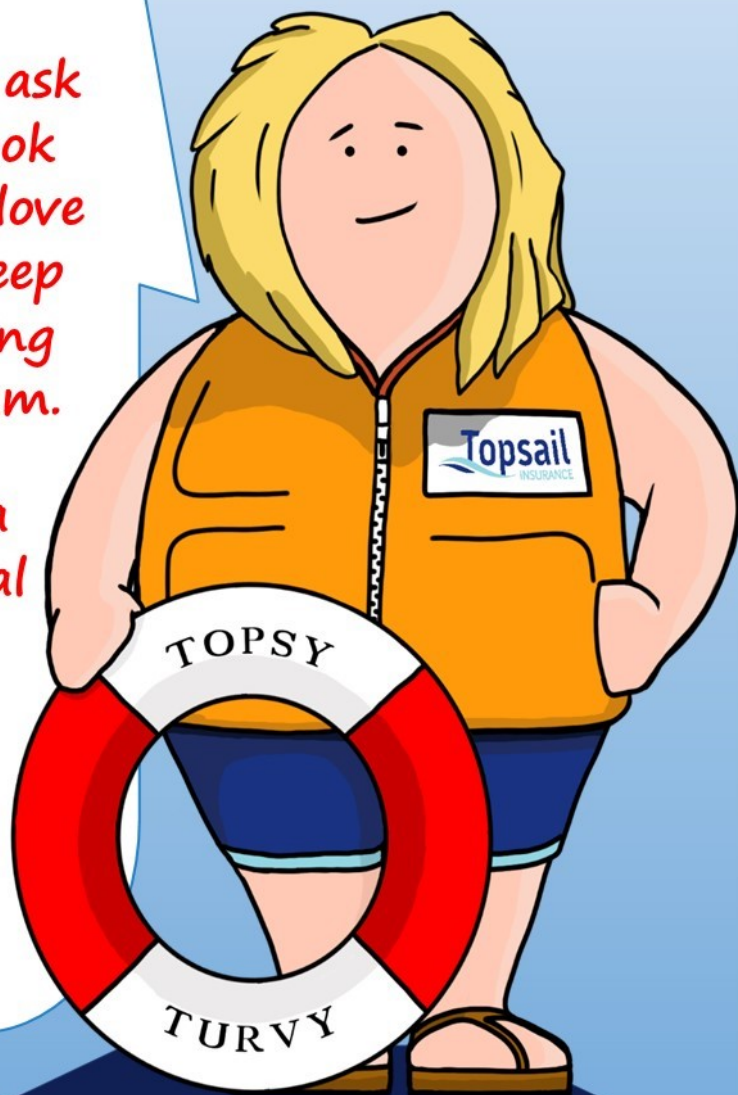
*Congratulations and \$50 each goes to winners Celia Davey, and Julie Porter for the last riddle competition which was “tell-tales”*

*This month I've got a favour to ask of you. We've got a new facebook and Instagram account and I'd love to have you follow Topsail to keep up with lots of interesting sailing articles and news from the team.*

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# The Stuff of Dreams

## Beautiful Port Stephens

### Cherylle Stone

There are countless places in the world that are fabulous havens for sailors, but my favourite is Port Stephens in New South Wales, Australia. It has been my home port for 30 years. The longer I stay, the more I see its beauty, its wonderful social and natural assets, and its ability to wrap me and my boat in a safe, attractive, action-filled cocoon.

The entrance from seaward, surrounded by Boondelbah, Little, and Cabbage Tree Islands, with Broughton Island on the northern flank and Point Stephens to the south, surpasses any other in Australia for beauty. There is easy access through deep water to a port that stretches some 15 nautical miles east to west and is about 3 nautical miles wide most of the way. Myall Lakes, a short trip up the Myall River, and the Karuah River offer additional excellent cruising and boating opportunities.

While there is some low-density settlement around Port Stephens, there is still an abundance of natural vegetation, including

wetland and mangroves alive with wildlife. Clean, sandy beaches are interspersed with rocky headlands with a crown of eucalypt forest, filled with Gynea lilies and Christmas Bush, on the adjacent hills.

The waterway has large population of resident bottlenose dolphins and a colony of little penguins. Humpback whales visit on their annual migrations from Antarctica to northern Australia. Grey nurse sharks inhabit the caves of Looking Glass Island near Broughton Island. Sea dragons and nudibranchs regally move through the seagrass at Fly Point. Black swans drift around the port foraging for seagrass while sea turtles rest in the sheltered waters on their travels around the Pacific. Whimbrels visit from Siberia and wedge-tailed shearwaters come from the Philippines to summer here. Marlin and other large pelagic fish inhabit the offshore waters.

There are still enough mullet, lobsters, and blue swimmer crabs to support a commercial





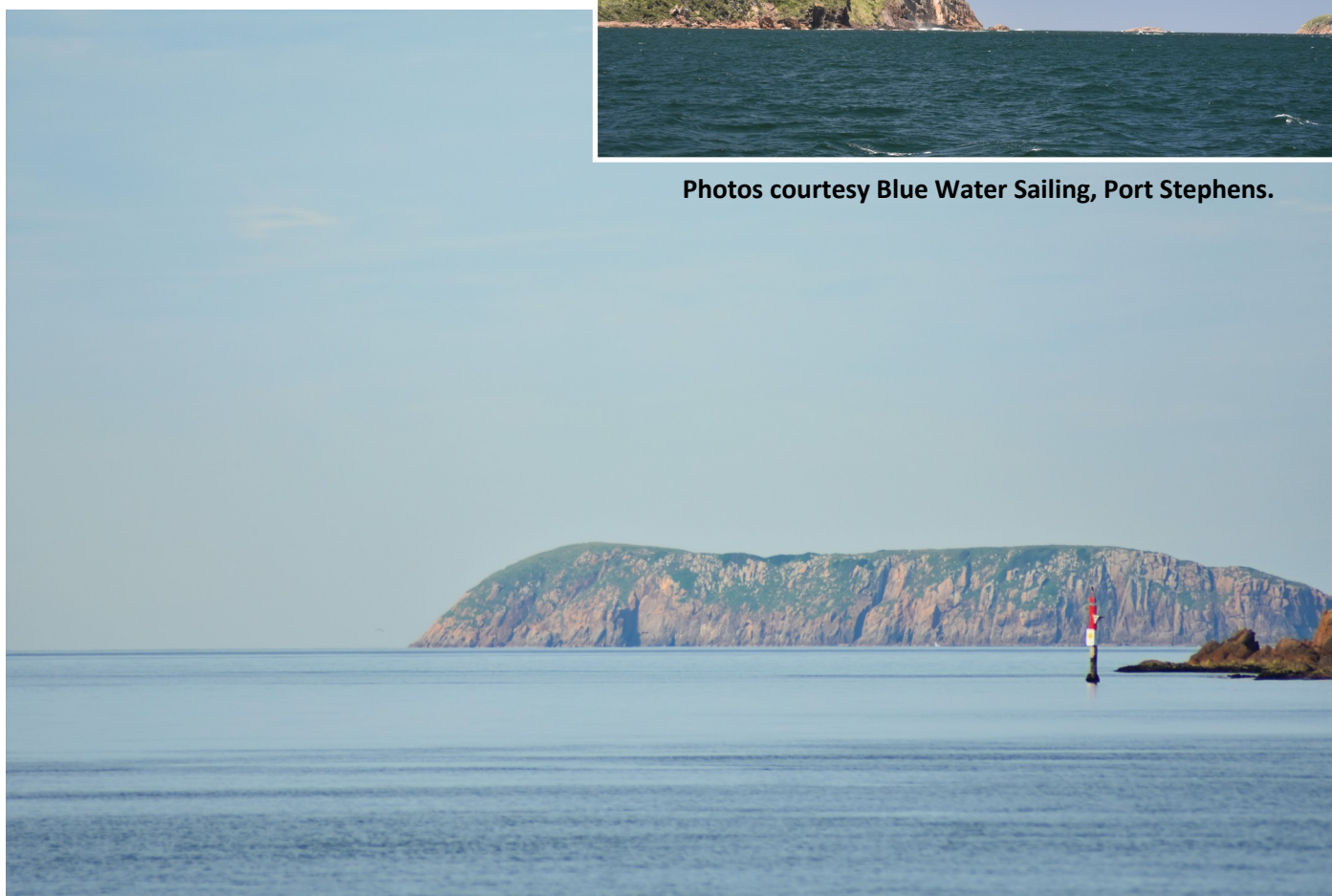
**ABOVE: Approaching Shoal Bay from the west.**

**RIGHT: Looking seaward through the heads.**

**BELOW: Looking east to Boondelbah Island.**



**Photos courtesy Blue Water Sailing, Port Stephens.**





fishery, and the oyster industry is a mainstay of the local economy.

Thousands of years of Worimi Aboriginal cultural heritage is evident in many places, including on the beach at Mary's Bay where the remnants of a large rock fish trap still stretch across the beach. The Worimi used bark canoes to traverse the port to maintain kinship connections, fish and collect food, including the stalks of Gynea lilies and a variety of shellfish. Worimi custodianship continues with their integral involvement in managing the Port Stephens Marine Park and commercial fishing.

Port Stephens was once the headquarters of the Australian Agricultural Company, one of whose directors was Phillip Parker King. He circumnavigated Australia three times between 1817 and 1823 to chart the Kimberley and west coast of Australia. As I sail the waters of my home, I often imagine I am following in the wakes of highly

competent European and Worimi seafarers.

I first visited Port Stephens in September 1980 and spent a wonderful week camping in company with other Hobie sailors, exploring the Myall Lakes, learning to windsurf in calm,



Aboriginal fish trap at Mary's Bay.  
Photo Cherylle Stone.

Fame Cove is known for its sunsets.  
Photo Shelley Wright.





sheltered waters, and walking for miles through bush and along ocean beaches. The following week we transferred to a rented house right on Wanda Beach where we could launch our boats into the crystal clear water and meander from one end of the port to the other, including out through the heads after a boozy lunch at the Shoal Bay Country Club Hotel. That was in the days before any of us were aware how stupid it is to mix grog and boats underway, especially in little tippy 16-foot catamarans. Fortunately, whoever is in charge looked after us fools and sailors and we all came home safely.

The waterway is a fabulous venue for inshore sailing and is regularly host to a variety of national and international championship

events. The International Canoe World Championships were staged here, and there have been many A-Class, Tornado, Nacra, Hobie, Taipan, 16-foot Skiffs and Laser National and State titles sailed on waters relatively free from silly topographical wind shifts. A 70 strong fleet of keel boats and off-the-beach juniors' dinghies migrate from Sydney and further afield to participate in an annual two-week festival of sail, the Sail Port Stephens Regatta. Shoal Bay has hosted the Australian Dragon Boat Championships. Every 12 years Port Stephens hosts the Pacific Rim Sister Cities Regatta, as much a cultural exchange as a sailing event, for teams from Russia (Nahodka), Canada (Victoria), the US (Bellingham), Japan (Tatiana), and New Zealand (Tauranga).

Three sailing clubs, Port Stephens Yacht Club, Port Stephens Sailing and Aquatic Club (now the Bay Sailing Centre), and Tanilba Bay Sailing Club conduct regular racing which caters for keel boats and trailer sailers, off-the-beach dinghies and off-the-beach cats.



Some of the bay's resident dolphins.

Photos courtesy Blue Water Sailing, Port Stephens.





***Subzero*, Wednesday afternoon sailing.  
Photo Cherylle Stone.**



**RIGHT: Women love racing aboard *Subzero*.  
Photo Cherylle Stone.**



**Port Stephens Yacht Club race fleet.  
Photo courtesy Blue Water Sailing, Port Stephens.**



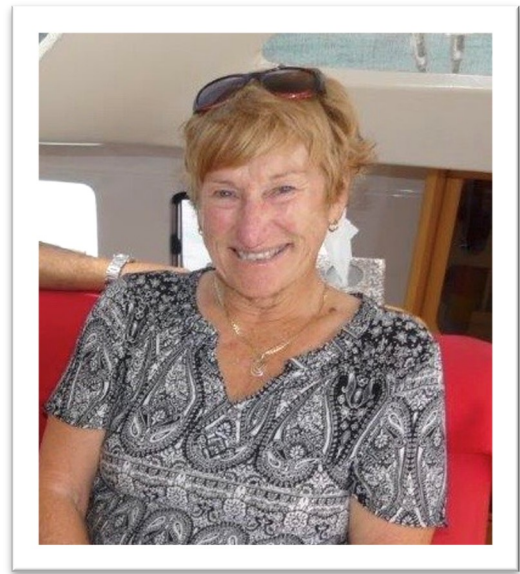


When the winter westerlies roar, vessels have a choice of four marinas providing sanctuary. Boat repairs are available in two boatyards and one slipway and there is a very well stocked chandlery plus numerous marine services and repairers to cater for every need. The port is well endowed with Marine Parks and Roads and Maritime Services courtesy moorings and free berths which are popular with transiting vessels and locals alike.

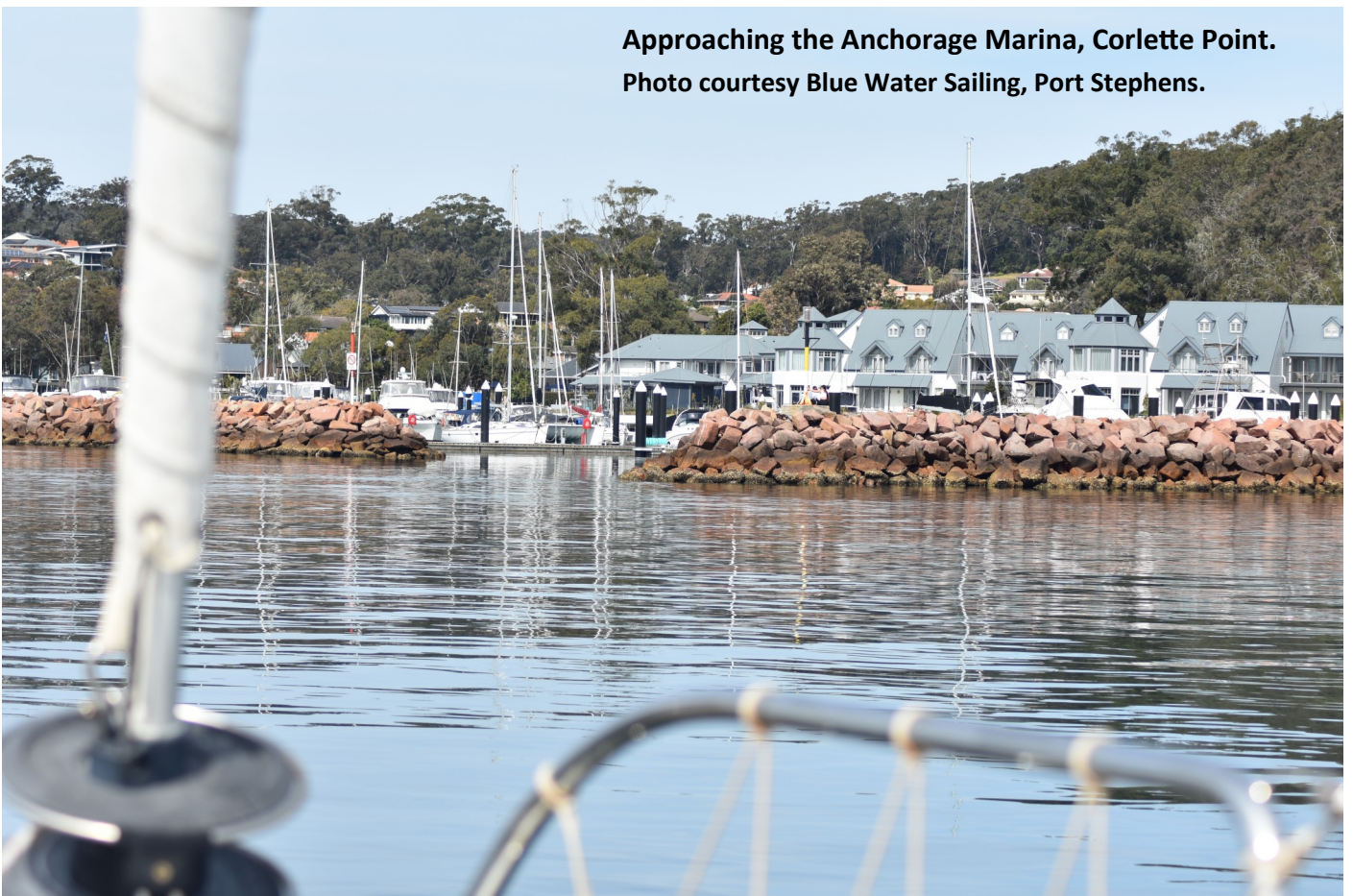
Port Stephens is the home of the annual Women Who Sail Gathering on the Bay, a multi-day conference for women on the water which has been held in Port Stephens for the past five years and which attracts participants and speakers from New Zealand, Canada, the US, and all over Australia. The Port Stephens members gather regularly for coffee and provide each other and transiting members with a level of support rarely encountered outside the cruising community.

While I usually cruise north or east for the winter, I relish returning to Port Stephens for a summer of racing, occasional social sailing,

boat maintenance, and to regain a sense of belonging by reconnecting with my local community.



**Cherylle sails *Subzero*, a 12.5 metre Grainger catamaran. She has cruised extensively in the south-west Pacific, circumnavigated Australia and done numerous passages up and down the east coast. She is passionate about encouraging more women to sail and has all women crews for summer racing while the majority of her cruising crew are also women.**



**Approaching the Anchorage Marina, Corlette Point.  
Photo courtesy Blue Water Sailing, Port Stephens.**





**ABOVE:** *Subzero* homeward bound off Sugarloaf Lighthouse. Photo: Cherylle Stone.



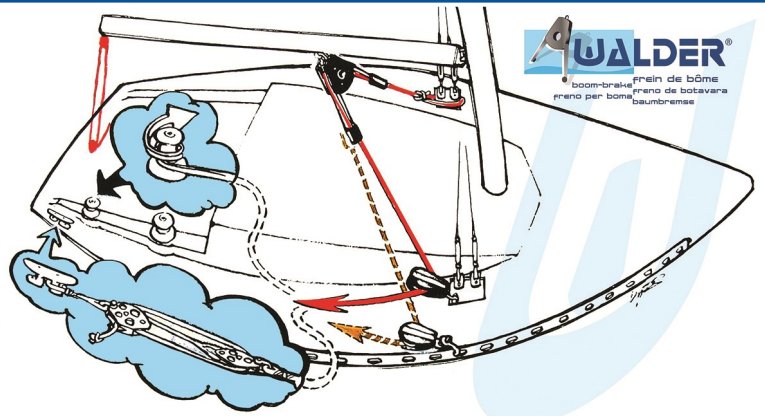
**LEFT:** Marine Rescue base, Nelson Head.

**BELOW:** The turquoise waters and white sands of Shoal Bay.

Photos courtesy Blue Water Sailing, Port Stephens.







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# KAYAKING IN THE ROUGH STUFF

View from the trough of a wave aboard *ChardonNay*.

Lyn Battle

BANG! The noise came from directly behind me. Then ‘thud-thud-rattle’ and the kayak started to slide broadside to the wave I’d just soared over.

I couldn’t turn to look around while I was being rocked wildly from side to side in danger of imminent capsize. I dug deep with the paddle and brought the bow round into the wind again. We steadied in the trough and I glanced quickly over my right shoulder. Yep, the rudder had jumped out of its fitting and was flapping around like an injured flipper, uselessly and dangerously, banging against the stern of the kayak.

“Bugger”. OK, I might have used the F-word at that point. There was nobody near to hear me. And it was all my husband’s fault anyway.

I was training to become the first woman to paddle a kayak around our island, and the first person to do it non-stop. It’s not a huge island, but 30 kilometres of wilderness coastline seemed big enough to count as a significant achievement. Especially as I’d only bought my old second-hand plastic boat a few months earlier and taken up sea kayaking

as part of an alcohol-free challenge. I named her *ChardonNay* as it was saying “Nay” to my wine habit that had brought about this whole adventure.

“Pick something you couldn’t possibly do right now,” they said, “something that with training might be achievable a few months down the track...” No worries. I paddled up and down the sheltered shore, clocking up a hundred miles and several professional looking calluses.

“You only paddle when the weather is fine,” said my husband. “You need to practice in the chop.”

“I won’t be going round if it’s windy,” I protested. “I’ll pick a calm day, neap tides, no current, no worries...”

“What happens if the wind comes up when you’re halfway round?”

“Oh. Well, I’d just paddle to shore and do it another day.”

But what if the wind came up when I was



off the rocky reefs or headlands where I couldn't get ashore. Or even worse – what if the wind came up when I was almost all the way round and I had to bail out within sight of my goal...

*ChardonNay* is a solid, chunky, broad-bottomed girl, with pretty lines in that curvaceous wholesome way. Her sea-sprayed and sun-bleached pink bow blending to her purple stern, gives her an air of a boat that has been places and done things. Which indeed she has. At almost 20 years of age, she has travelled from her birthplace at the Perception Kayaks factory in New Zealand, first to Sydney, then to Newell Beach, north of Cairns, where she safely carried her owner across the open sea to Port Douglas several times a week – only once did she falter and capsize while crossing the Mossman River mouth. She's a safe sea boat and I had no desire to push her too hard in her golden years.

At 57 years old myself, I had travelled from Ireland to Australia, had my own adventures between Sydney and Cairns, and had no wish to capsize in the so-called 'croc and shark infested' waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria. Because that would be the headlines: "middle aged woman found...". You get the picture. "What on earth was she doing out there in the first place? Wouldn't you think she'd have more sense? Why on earth did her husband let her go out there on her own?" They would say.



Rudder.

So, it was all his fault. Up to now, I went for training paddles in the calm afternoons, but today I went out early, while the stiff southeast trade winds were blowing. I'd decided to paddle the kayak around to the other side of the island, and train on that side for a few weeks, to learn the reefs and currents as well as I'd learned on this side.

My husband Tex and our coxswain Peter were going to come out in the charter boat *Salomon* after smoko\* to check on me and guide me through the gap in the reef to the far side of the island.

I bounced up over the swells as I paddled along in the lee of the island, warily eyeing the whitecaps in the distance, beyond the shelter of MacDonald Point. *ChardonNay* rose willingly like a seasoned steeplechaser to the next brush fence and slid confidently down the other side. I wished I had her self-assurance. Instead of dropping off as forecast, the wind had risen to about 20 knots. The waves were getting bigger, and the infamous 'Gulf Chop' meant that there was little time for paddle strokes between sets. My 15-foot kayak was barely down the face of one wave before the trough had rolled under us and the bow was spearing into the next wave. I wasn't making much forward progress, just going up and down, two steps forward, one step back.

*ChardonNay* seemed to know what she was doing, but I was not so sure of myself. I decided to call Tex on the radio to say that it was too rough to go right around to the far side and not to bother coming out. I'd just paddle on this side of the point and get some practice in the biggish waves, then I'd turn around and go back. No worries.

I stopped paddling to reach forward and unscrew the waterproof deck bag where the radio was. The minute I stopped paddling, the kayak lurched to one side and I nearly capsized. "Bugger", again. I'd practiced falling out of the boat and climbing back in



but not in seas this big. What if I fell out and couldn't get back in? What if I couldn't turn around to go back? Oh, I wished I knew how to do the Eskimo Roll.

I stopped thinking about falling out and focussed on staying upright. *It's just water, Lyn, it's just water flowing along and you're on the top, just relax and let the water flow under you*, and what do you know, when I stopped struggling, the waves just did their thing and flowed under the kayak and I was still sitting upright, although I wasn't making much headway.

It was hard work pointing the kayak into every wave, but she rose steadily up each face, and I started to get the hang of which way to point, as I gauged which direction the tops were going to tumble and break. I leaned forward over the deck, kept my centre of gravity low, and started to enjoy the sensation of rising up, then pitching forward to fly down the other side. This was a bit like riding a horse over jumps!

Tex and Peter would be here soon and if necessary, they could stand off to make some sheltered lee for me to turn around in. *No worries! I think I'm starting to get the hang of this!*

Then Murphy poked me in the eye and there was that loud BANG behind me...

The metal rudder was now hanging by the control cables and banging against the hull. I couldn't reach it. I tried stretching the paddle back behind me and nearly capsized again. What if it punched a hole in the boat? Would we sink? We were a team and poor old *ChardonNay* was wounded and needed my help. We'd rounded the southwest tip of the island and now the southeasterly was pushing us back towards the rocky shore. I remembered reading Stuart Truman's book 'All the Way Round' about his solo kayaking circumnavigation of Australia. His rudder had come undone, and he'd pulled on his control cables to hold it tight against the hull. I hauled on the cable and tied it off as tight

as I could. The horrible knocking stopped, but I still had no steering, so I dug the paddle in deep to keep *ChardonNay* pointed out to sea and tried to make some headway. I knew that the combination of wind, waves, and tide were pushing me towards shore. This was not good. Where on earth were Tex and Peter. What if they forgot to come? What if they couldn't see me because I was much further inshore than they expected? The waves were huge now, every time I rose up on a crest I could see angry gnashing whitecaps all around, then we'd sink down into the troughs again and see nothing but brown-green water all around. What if they went straight past me 'cause they couldn't see me in the troughs?

My brain stopped with the "What If's" long enough for some practical thinking.

I reached forward and pulled the bright yellow 'paddle float' from under the deck elastic. It's a bit like the inflatable armbands children wear for swimming, with a strap that attaches it to the paddle blade. I blew into the tube to inflate it and clipped it to the deck lines; all the time scanning the horizon for a glimpse of our charter boat *Salomon*.

Yes! There she was, well around the point but not heading my way. Oh, my goodness, was I really this far inshore? She was not where I expected to see her, way out there. They'd be looking ahead for me, not in here. I was over the reef platform; would it be too shallow for the big boat? What if they didn't look over this way?

I slipped the paddle float over the blade, clipped it secure, and held my yellow paddle 'flag' high in the air while I crouched low for stability, rolling in the troughs now, surrendered to the situation and ready for rescue. Come on guys, turn this way, turn this way. YES! The six metre power cat suddenly turned straight towards me, slowing down as it came over the reef ledge but steadily moving my way, while I hastily removed the



float and clipped it to the deck lines to deflate later, using the paddle to brace and stabilise as the big boat motored around me, churning up wake.

“What’s up?” called Tex through the noise of wind and motors, trying to manoeuvre alongside, while I tried to stay clear, as the aluminium hull looked alarmingly like a container ship to my life raft.

“The rudder’s come loose!”

“Bugger. Jump out and we’ll get the kayak on board and give you a lift back.”

I looked at the pitching metal boat. It didn’t look like an easy task to get the plastic kayak on board without something else snapping, if only my nerves.

“Wait. If you could reach across and pop the rudder back in, I’d be OK to paddle back.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes!” No hesitation. Who said that? Me?

Peter leaned out and saw how the rudder pin was supposed to fit. I slacked off the cable, a few rises and falls on the waves and bingo, in it popped. Now, if I didn’t flick up over

another big wave, it shouldn’t happen again.

“Are you sure you want to paddle back?”

“Yes!”

“OK – we’ll stay with you til you get around the point.”

I powered onwards, this time with the seas on my stern quarter. We lagged in the troughs and got spun off course a few times, but we weren’t heaving up breaking waves anymore. The guys puttered along slowly at a safe distance. I paddled on steadily, determined to finish this on my terms. If I couldn’t get round to the far side of the island, I was damned if I was going to be carried home like a damsel in distress.

*ChardonNay* agreed and we surged around the headland and into the shelter of the channel again, with the Sandy Point of the resort visible a mile or so ahead.

“OK on your own now?” called Tex.

“Yes! Thank you! I should be back in about half an hour or so.”

“OK, see you back at home then.” They revved up and sped off.

**Rescue vessel approaching.**





I watched them become smaller and the sound of the motors faded until it was just the plop and splash of the paddle again, with the wind and shore waves in the background.

“Well, *Chardy*,” I slapped the pink deck, “we might not have got round to the far side, but we’ve done it, we’ve survived the big waves. Played in the rough stuff. I’ll get some cable ties and make sure that rudder doesn’t pop out again. We might take a day off tomorrow, but we’ll get around. And we did it, we didn’t fall out. We kept going, and we paddled home.”

Funny how things work out and it was too rough to get the radio out to tell them not to come...

**\*Smoko:** Australian slang for morning or afternoon tea.

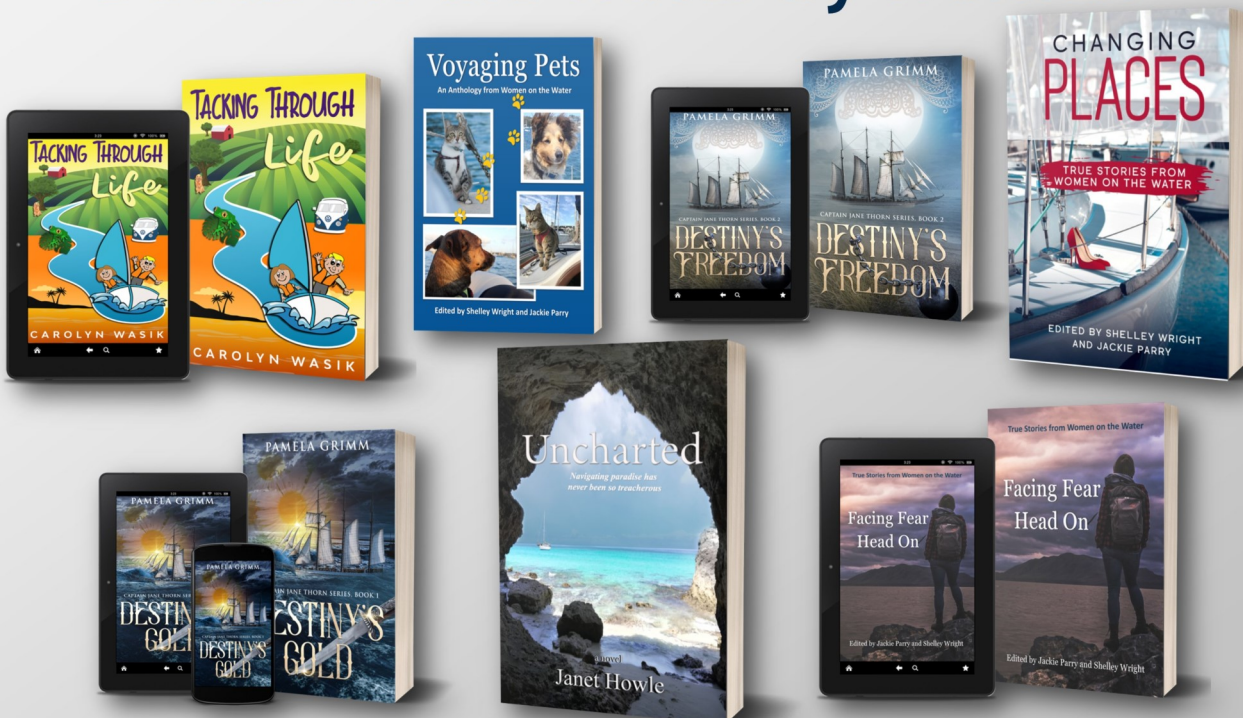


Lyn has always loved the sea. She grew up in Ireland, moved to Australia aged 23 where she met and married Tex. Together with friends, they built a small fishing lodge on remote Sweers Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria, where they’ve been welcoming guests for over 30 years. Lyn dabbles in everything: a bit of sailing, a bit of yoga, a bit of kayaking, a bit of writing. In 2018 she succeeded in becoming the first person to paddle a kayak nonstop around the island. In 2019 she finally mastered the Eskimo Roll.

[www.sweersisland.com](http://www.sweersisland.com)



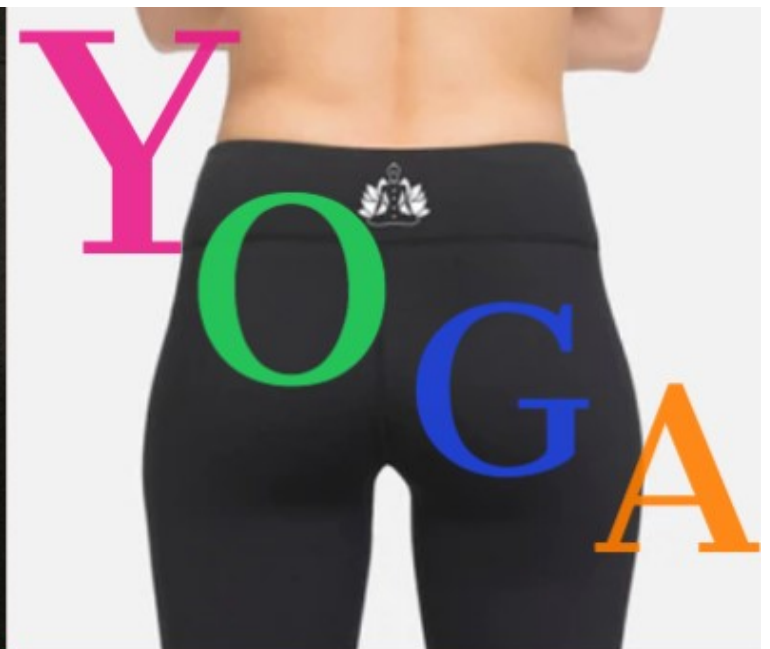
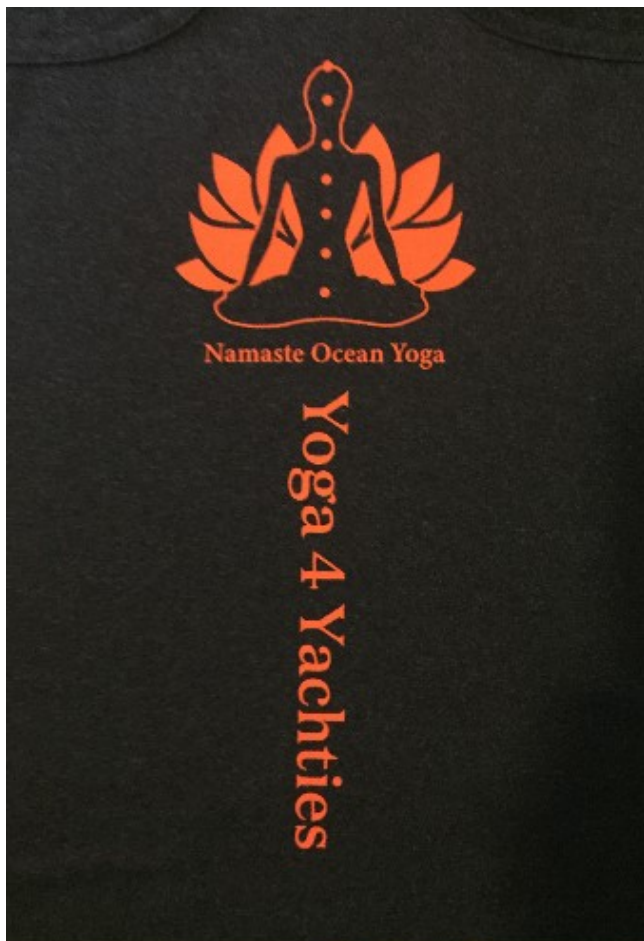
## Books on the water by women



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# *SisterShip* Watches ...



**By Amy Alton**

## ***Sailing Nakama***

Many people who start cruising learn from scratch, including many of the most famous sailing channels. But in the case of Sophie from *Sailing Nakama*, she moved aboard the family cruising boat when she was one year old (you can read more from Sophie and her mum Annette Hesselman in the Feb 2019 issue of *SisterShip Magazine*). Now, she sails her boat *Nakama* on the east coast of Australia with her boyfriend Slim and cat Chilli.

Their videos make me both laugh and nostalgic for the Australian coast. Sophie tackles plenty of grimy boat projects herself, and they sail bare bones on their Duncanson 34, sharing all of it on their YouTube channel.

**Amy: Your channel is pretty new, though you've been sailing for a while. What inspired you to start your channel now?**

**Sophie:** *Nakama* came into my life at 19, and I was fortunate enough to be in the position to buy her. I had watched sailing channels

(mostly in my English classes in year 12 at school) and had contemplated the idea of creating my own since 2017. But at the time I lacked confidence and just thought that nobody would want to watch me. The thought of a sailing channel was reignited when Simon (Slim) out of the blue brought home a drone he saw during his lunch break on sale at JB HI FI. After one flight my mind was blown. The technology of these things is incomprehensible. What were we going to do with all this footage now? A sailing channel! So yes, a drone inspired us to start a YouTube channel.

**Amy: What does *Nakama* mean?**

**Sophie:** When I bought the boat, her name was *Crossroads*. This didn't exactly resonate with where I was at in my life or with how elegant the boat is. So, to the drawing board of names I went, tossing around a bunch of sounds and trying them out on her when aboard, *Nakama* came to mind. Not only did I love the sound, but it also came with the added meaning. *Nakama* is a Japanese word that translates to friend, comrade, or crewmate. Very relevant, I believe.



**Amy:** Unlike many cruising couples, you're the salty sailor in your relationship. You already owned *Nakama* when you met Slim. Tell us what it was like inviting him to the boat and getting him into sailing.

**Sophie:** It was very refreshing having Simon come around to the boat. His enthusiasm towards it really excited me. It's surprising how boating really just isn't for some and I was a bit nervous that after a couple of nights onboard he wouldn't be back. Simon had a lovely place by the beach, and I enjoyed having the option of staying in a square bed, being able to walk only a couple of metres to the shower and all the other things you can't get on *Nakama*. After having spent enough time together, it felt right to clean out the 50 x 50 cm cupboard that he was going to have to fit all his clothes in. Simon has a great amount of patience and calmness. His first sail was a baptism by fire. First stop, ploughing through breaking waves crossing the Brunswick Heads bar, second, flying up to the Gold Coast in twenty-five knot winds, and for the grand finale, getting pooped going through the Gold Coast seaway. But through this, he listened to everything I was saying and did as much as he could. That sail

would either make or break someone, but I don't think he had felt the sheer excitement of being alive for a while and was hooked. We stayed in Moreton Bay for a while, a nice, protected bay with multiple anchorages. It was a perfect learning ground for Simon, and for us to build a team. I think Simon is a better learner than I am a teacher, I really needed to learn to slow down in what I was saying so Simon could understand and once he understood, he took it on very quickly. I'm proud of how he has learnt and seeing him grow more confident and relish in this lifestyle is very rewarding.

**Amy:** How do you divide video production between you and Slim?

**Sophie:** We both love getting footage, Simon contributes a lot to the creative process. However, when it comes to the editing, I have found that I love it and really enjoy toying with new elements. Simon of course contributes to ideas and voice overs in the editing process, but I put it all together.

**Amy:** How has creating videos enhanced your sailing experience?

**Sophie:** So far, we have been overwhelmed

**Hummocky Island.**





by the generosity of people and their eagerness to meet up. We have already met some lovely people through our channel, and it's been super amazing creating a small community around us. Also, the ability for us to relive our experiences with the videos we create. It's crazy how much you forget until you are reminded by the footage.

**Amy:** Your cat Chilli lives onboard with you. What are some of the best and worst parts of having a cat onboard?

**Sophie:** Chilli is a big asset to the crew on *Nakama*, although she can't handle the ropes very well with her paws, she really does make the boat feel like home. It's quite surreal being in completely different spots and coming back to the boat and Chilli is there waiting patiently (probably for her bag of Whiskas). She is the best companion on night watches, and we get many laughs out of her. At each place we rock up to, once Chilli hears the anchor drop and the calm silence after the engine is off, she comes out of her cupboard (yes we keep a cupboard free just for her convenience) and sniffs the new land, only crazy animal owners would understand, but it's very joyful to watch. Though, yes there are



some negatives. Being in such a small space and having her kitty litter on the floor of what is our lounge room, dining room, and kitchen can become a nuisance, especially with guests over. You also quickly know when it's time to change her litter. I wonder if it's too late to teach her how to use the toilet...





Sail repairs Coffs Harbour.



**Amy:** What's your biggest struggle with your videos?

**Sophie:** We put a lot of time, energy, and love into each of our videos, always trying to make them better. What we have found is the biggest struggle for our channel, is what we should put as the title and thumbnail to grab people's attention for them to click on the video. All your efforts (days' worth of editing) are either rewarded if you nail this, or

not. The biggest struggle personally is, unfortunately when you invite the internet into both your life and home you can at times receive some oddly personal negative feedback. We try our best not to take this onboard but at times of course it can be upsetting. It's not easy, this whole YouTube thing.

**BELOW:** On the helm from Fraser Island to Bundaberg.





**Amy:** What's one piece of gear you wish you had onboard *Nakama*?

**Sophie:** We seriously lack instruments, the only thing running through the boat is a depth sounder, everything else is via phone apps. We are getting pretty good at gauging our speed by the sound the prop is making – when it hums we call it “the spinning prop of 5 knots”, so we know when we are above or below. We also have an AIS ready to be installed but nothing to run it through so maybe a chart plotter is on the top of our wish list.

**Amy:** What's your favorite modification you have made to *Nakama*?

**Sophie:** We finally have had an auto-helm installed, which we have named Otto (the bus driver from the Simpsons). This opens up so many new doors and opportunities for us. We have found that hand steering limited us with the number of nights we could be out for before we both can hardly keep our eyes open while trying to keep the boat on course. We definitely added a lot of miles to some of our passages, zigzagging as we became exhausted.

**Amy:** What's been your favorite stop on board *Nakama* so far? Where are you most looking forward to visiting?

**Sophie:** Ah! Although we have only just skimmed the surface of an abundance of incredible places it's hard to pick just one. We were blown away by Fraser Island, white sand and crystal waters with inland lakes like I have never seen before. We had Hummocky Island to ourselves so that was pretty special, although a bit rolly, the mountainous scenery of the island was spectacular. I would love to cruise Tasmania, ever since sailing down the west coast in the Melbourne to Hobart yacht race (with all female crew) in 2018, I've wanted to come back with *Nakama* and take my merry time.

**Amy:** Landlubbers often wonder how sailors can live in a small space with their partner. What tips do you have for maintaining sanity with Slim?

**Sophie:** Well, as it is such a small space, we do spend a lot of time doing outdoorsy things, this helps us both maintain sanity. And if we haven't gone for a walk, swim, or something active, we definitely know about it, as this is either due to one of us being





Uploading a video on Great Keppel Island. (lots of sandflies)



occupied and then the other starts to go stir crazy. We then have to initiate what we call “taking my Slim/Soph for a walk”. This usually calms the whole situation, and we can now step back into the boat with a peaceful energy. So yes, definitely keeping yourself outdoors is key. Things do start to get weird at times, for example when it’s been raining all week, even Chilli can feel the effects of

the rain and goes a little bonkers.

**Amy: What’s been your hardest or scariest moment on *Nakama*?**

**Sophie:** I think every day of coastal sailing something will present itself that makes you feel a bit nervous. But a moment that I really thought we were in trouble was crossing the Brunswick Heads bar. I had heard and seen how sailboats and breaking waves just really don’t go well together and having a wall of a

**BELOW: Trying to fix engine water leak (cause of the bilge water) and alternator belt.**





wave that I could see start to curl over and break before us was truly heart wrenching. There was no turning around at that point, we were committed, and I heard my mum's voice pop into my head saying 'straighten up and point the bow straight into the waves', so that's what I did. Coming off the back of the waves in the whitewash I was so worried that the engine had conked out as we had lost all momentum, but the prop was just struggling to catch. The boat had been in Brunswick Heads not moving for over a year due to this bar being so unruly. As I look back it was stupid of us to leave with the engine being so overdue for a service and stupid of us to leave on this day. But we got desperate and took a risk. We now have a very healthy relationship with bar crossings and take them extremely cautiously.

**Amy: What's one quality Slim has that makes him a great sailing partner? What strength do you have that you think makes you a good sailing partner?**

**Sophie:** I can't decide so I'm going to tell you two of my favourite qualities. Simon has a great amount of calmness, even in the hairiest of situations. I now know that when he stops talking (I could leave him with a brick wall to make friends with) that this is him at his most anxious point. But although he may be anxious on the inside, I see a very calm Slim which disables what could be a heated moment for some. It also relaxes me and lets me make better decisions, which he is very supportive of. Secondly, is how amazingly positive Simon is. Sailing is not always easy or fun, but he seems incapable of seeing the negatives and really lifts the team up. He will be constantly chirpy to keep morale high and encouraging when he knows I need it. Simon really does not let the worst situations ruin our day. And for myself, I believe I have a good balance of crazy and sensibility, it works well with my insatiable desire for adventure without compromising our safety (too much).

**Amy: Is there anything else you want to share with the readers of *SisterShip Magazine*?**

**LEFT AND BELOW: Crossing Brunswick Bar.**





**Hummocky Island.**



**Sophie:** Sometimes you really do need to just go for it and things will work themselves out. Nothing can be perfect before you go otherwise you won't go. I suppose I'm referring to a perfect boat, there is always something that you could do with or the boat needs, but that list never ends and you will never do it. You will be surprised with how little you need to get around, so just go for it. The phrase we go by is: do it when you can, not when you're ready because you will never be truly ready.

**Links:**

<https://www.facebook.com/sailingnakama/>

[https://www.instagram.com/\\_sophiesnijders/](https://www.instagram.com/_sophiesnijders/)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxmP5PorJ9GFyBBGE1jK7sA>



Amy Alton, in partnership with her husband, shares their journey on their YouTube channel, [Out Chasing Stars](#). You can also enjoy her writing and photography on their blog, [OutChasingStars.com](#).



# Riding the 'COVID Wave'



**Sonia Robinson**



## ***EziYacht Brokerage owner Sonia Robinson shares her insights into the rise and fall of buying and selling over the past 12 months and casts her predictions for the future***

If one was to compare our seasonal weather with boat buying and selling trends, one would have to say that when it rains it pours. The demand for motor and sailing vessels has increased exponentially in the past 12 months with no signs of the market slowing.

This time last year Australia was experiencing an extreme drought followed by catastrophic bushfires and entering into the greatest period of ‘unknowns’ on a global spectrum.

For most sellers, the market slowed considerably during winter, and for interstate buyers, things pretty much ground to a halt when borders closed, with the only option being to hold off on purchasing or buy ‘sight unseen’ (more on this later).

As the year progressed with no sight of a travel bubble or weakening border restrictions, a paradigm shift occurred with resourceful Ozzies looking for ways to enjoy the outdoors closer to home.

‘Vacation’ became ‘Staycation’ with caravan, motorhome, and camper sales popping their tops. With the mercury on the rise as summer approached, soon followed the rush with motorboat and yacht sales peaking to new heights from November to February.

**LEFT: *Madrigal* sold in December 2020 within a week of listing.**



### **Panic buying: The early bird catches the worm**

As the saying goes, this has been true for both buyers and sellers, particularly as we approached the warmer months. In most states, and with travel restrictions in place, higher than average numbers of people have opted to spend their travel savings holidaying at home, with Ozzies looking for ways to enjoy the outdoors, hiking, camping, and of course – boating.

Since our world as we know it changed, more than 80% of EziYacht brokerage sales have occurred ‘sight unseen’. That’s quite a significant increase to what was generally considered ‘risky business’.

A recent sale with EziYacht (and WWSA member yacht) happened to come on the market at the peak of the buying frenzy. Although not the ‘run of the mill’ yacht, this model was on the top of one particular couple’s list, and they were happy to wait until one came on the market (knowing that this could mean travelling overseas and waiting it out for some time).

When their exact dreamboat popped up in their inbox over the Australia Day long



weekend, they were away in the country – as were the staff of EziYacht. Not reaching me by phone, and rather than risk the possibility of missing out on the yacht, the eager boat shoppers jumped into the car and drove halfway to Sydney only to learn that the yacht would not be open to viewings until later that week. They decided to put their offer in immediately over the phone ‘sight unseen’ and never looked back. At the time of writing, they are very happy and proud new owners and WWSA has gained a new member as they sail south on their adventures.

### **Buying blind: Pointers on buying blind or if you’re in a rush to buy**

Once you make your offer be prepared to see your purchase through – but don’t rush through the purchase process. If you are not

**BELOW: Kim and Phil Seeley aboard their new ‘blind’ purchase IP420 Ansoba.**

comfortable putting a deposit down, then you’re not ready to buy ‘sight unseen’. You may not end up with that particular boat, but you will not lose sleep at night worrying whether or not you’ve made the right decision.

If you have put a deposit down and you can arrange a virtual viewing or an extended settlement to allow time to travel to see the yacht then great – if that’s not an option then be prepared to book flights, survey, and test sail all in one go. If things don’t go to plan, then you at least should be able to legitimately remove yourself from the situation and have your deposit returned (in most cases). If you simply get cold feet, then you could be up for a bit of a loss. The best thing to do is to discuss all the options with a broker you trust *before* you commit to the purchase and this can all be done in just one phone call. If you’re not getting the answers you need or you don’t have full faith in the transaction or the people you’re dealing with, then it’s probably best to keep looking.







## Should I sell?

While boats are holding their value very well, and the demand remains high, buyers in general are better educated on the value of boats. Quality is more a priority than ever as buyers are particularly cautious and have become more aware on what to look for. This is greatly due to the growing number of YouTube channels on DIY sailboat repairs and cruising vloggers documenting their experiences at sea. What better way to spend lockdown than with a good book or scanning the various YouTube channels wishing it was you!

**Presentation is key:** So get your overalls on (or pay someone else) and make sure she's looking her absolute best before you go out and put up the 'For Sale' sign. Take a really good critical look at your boat and ask yourself, *Is my boat looking her best?*



**ABOVE: Good quality photos of a tidy cockpit and interior helps buyers form a clear picture.**

Don't think for a second that you can make an 'easy' or a 'quick' sell without putting the work in first.

Pay particular attention to the little jobs that are most noticed – for example, replace any blown lightbulbs, fix that leaking tap, stitch the torn canvas, clean off mildewy sails or lines, run a coat of varnish over that worn timber frame, and cross off all the small 'pending' projects before you attempt to sell.

No one wants to pay good money for a project boat these days. They need to be



ready to drop the lines and enjoy time afloat so make her every bit as presentable as she could be – then you're ready.

## What does the future look like?

### Learning to meet demands of a new kind

Several theories float about when discussing future trends with brokers or prospective buyers and sellers:

- Will panic buying help to sell our boat?
- Will panic selling mean a better price?
- How long will the sales rush last?
- Will the market remain hot over winter?
- Will there be any stock or should we abandon our plans to buy in Australia and look at importing? ... (that's a crazy idea at the current time by the way.)

All the hype can actually obscure one's vision and alter one's ability to make informed decisions when buying. And it can certainly take the pleasure out of boat shopping.

With stock levels still lower than usual in most parts of the country, the ongoing demand for quality cruising vessels has led to quicker turnaround sales across the country with NSW leading the procession. Summer (Dec – Feb) statistics have shown a spike in boat sales under three months on the market with several yachts selling within four to six weeks – or silently. Into March 2021, and while we are still under a 'travel ban', it's safe to say that the demand for motor and sailing yachts remains high with more buyers on waitlists should their 'dream boat' present itself. More people are looking to buy used yachts as wait times on boating syndicates and new yacht deliveries means more delays.

It's not just boats that are in demand – the service industry has been overwhelmed by

boating enthusiasts wanting maintenance done on their boats as more and more people take to our waterways. Wait lists are long so if you're looking to buy a project yacht, it's a good idea to get friendly at your local marina and get in the queue early!

## A closer look at your shopping list: What can you compromise on?

'Time and tide wait for no man' and this is indeed very true of current times. If you find yourself feeling quite frustrated that you have not managed to secure your dream yacht by now, you may have to consider doing something drastic (like taking up bowling or golf!).

**The compromise:** Don't panic if someone beats you to your dreamboat. There will always be more yachts on the horizon. However, you may need to adjust your 'check list' and allow for more compromise if you are impetuous by nature and keen to get on the water now.

I interact often with those looking to buy or sell cruising yachts suited to blue water cruising. I find oftentimes that those looking have a very clear picture in mind of what they want and are not too keen to budge from their search criteria. One point I often make is that for the first couple of years you are most likely not going to be venturing too far offshore (even more so with border closures). So, I suggest that you consider settling for something other than the true blue water cruiser (that may be less available), and perhaps look at a suitable compromise in a good quality coastal cruiser that will offer you great fun, adventures, and experiences afloat for less cost and bring on your sailing experience. You may possibly even get your money back when you sell in a few year's time to buy your 'forever boat'.

At the end of the day, it's being out there



enjoying our wonderful waterways that counts – even if you haven't found your forever boat... if you do your due diligence when buying any boat, it will serve you well and re-sale should not pose a problem.

### Top Tips:

- Write to Brokers and let them know what you're looking for. We always know what's around and what may be coming up soon – if we don't know what you're looking for we can't help you.
- Get on Social Media and learn more about living aboard in general as it doesn't always match one's expectations.
- If you're selling, don't expect to get more money than your boat is worth without putting in the work to justify the ask price.

## A final word on buying and selling in 2021:

### 'If You snooze You Lose'

If you find a boat on the market that you like that fits your criteria, commit and buy as there will be a long list of people behind you ready to make an offer if you don't. What's more important to you – sipping cocktails at anchor or spending hours scrolling on Yachthub?

- For a seller it's a good time to sell but the expectations are higher so make your boat stand out if you're looking for a smooth sale and don't be greedy.
- Everyone wants boats and there simply aren't enough to go around.
- Delivery times are slow on new yachts.
- Wait lists for trades and services are long so get a boat that's ready to enjoy.
- With more of an emphasis on social

media and YouTube, the market is attracting a different type of (savvy) buyer and that is pushing the demand up. This has a greater impact on sales with more people getting into boating and boat share.

- YouTube Channels are great for showing people how to do their own maintenance, but they can't provide you with the skills and experience needed when you set sail so be careful. Take some lessons if you're new to sailing and if you're selling to a novice, be careful when you hand over the keys. I personally believe it's un-ethical to send someone out if they don't have the required skills so offer to give them some pointers or suggest some training... they'll thank you for it later.

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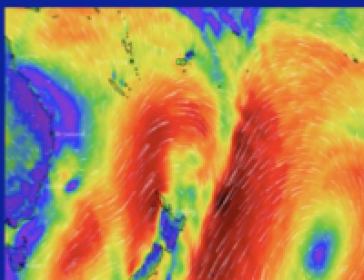
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## WINDSURFING AT RPYC : A NEW ERA

Royal Perth Yacht Club has established a highly successful Youth Windsurfing Programme using the BIC Techno 293OD board and rigs. In consultation with Australian Sailing, the club adopted the BIC Techno 293 One Design and 293 Plus as new fleets at the Dinghy Division. The Techno 293 is the World Youth board but probably more importantly it is a fun board to sail! The Techno 293 Plus uses the same board but with a larger rig and is sailed in Under 19 and Open divisions which caters for adult sailors. Importantly the Techno provides an alternative pathway for boys and girls leaving the Opti, O'Pen Skiff, and all junior fleets. We are able to offer opportunities for both existing sailors as well as those new to the sport.

The windsurfing programme adds a totally new dimension to the sailing options at Royal Perth Yacht Club. Whilst there are clear pathways for competitive involvement, the focus will be on participation, getting out there and having fun! Windsurfing will

present an opportunity for more recreational engagement at the club involving adults as well as youth sailors.

The RPYC Windsurfing Programme is comprehensive and comprises Learn to Windsurf, Start Racing, Club Racing as well as development to State/National/International level competition. Importantly the skills developed on the Techno are transferrable to all other windsurfing disciplines including slalom, waves, and wind foiling.

The latest development is the introduction of the Foil One wind foiling board that is providing a seamless transition for our Techno sailors into the super exciting wind foiling discipline! As well as being an amazing board to sail, super-fast and stacks of fun, the Foil One provides a pathway for Olympic aspirants.

More details of the programme contact Chris Goldacre: [sailtraining@rpyc.com.au](mailto:sailtraining@rpyc.com.au)





## **The BIC Techno Youth Squad, Rottnest Island Windsurfing Clinic**

### **Photo essay by Greer Marns**

The BIC Techno Youth Squad sailed over to Rottnest Island, Western Australia for a three-day windsurfing clinic on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Thirteen sailors between the ages of 13 and 19 attempted the 10-mile open ocean crossing. This channel can be quite rough – the Youth Squad experienced 20-22 knots for the last 30-40 minutes of the crossing. Three girls were among the 11 sailors who made it all the way: Jaiya Marns-Morris (sail number 1151), Meg McAullay (sail number 2121), and Caitlin Shaw (sail number 1525).

Aged 13, my daughter Jaiya was the youngest sailor on the water. Jaiya is an ex-boat kid (we cruised for three years from 2015-2018 around the Caribbean and across the Pacific). She is also a BIC Techno Youth Squad

**Jaiya Marns-Morris.**



National champion (top female) 2020, sails a 29-er, and is a fierce rock-climber!









Meg McAullay.





Caitlin Shaw.





Jaiya Marns-Morris.



Jaiya Marns-Morris.



The Youth Squad.





## Night Passage

Beneath the stars,  
afloat night's hush:  
the two of us.

Waves hiss  
with luminescent foam.  
So much unknown.

Like scrimshaw gulls,  
white sails carve wind  
as day begins.

We journey far from where we've been  
as darkness holds us in her arms.  
Polaris and blind faith our charms:  
the two of us, so much unknown, as day begins.

**Katy McKinney**





"The Bahamas, a mystery, and sailing with a touch of romance. Great writing, local knowledge, a mystery you can't put down and authentic sailing scenes"

Amazon reader review Nov 2020

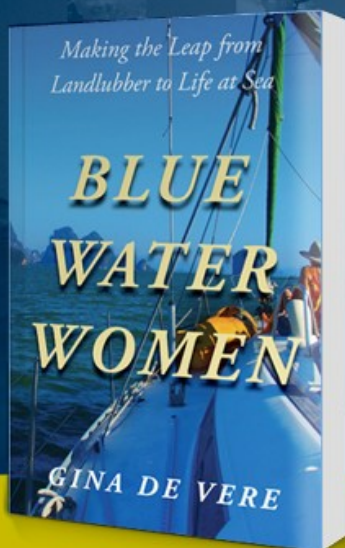


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**Tanya Rabe**



## Meet a Dog Who Sails Harley D

Our Dogs Who Sail Facebook group now has a whopping 2,500 dogs who are on boats all over the world.

Five years after creating this group, I am still moved by the owners' devotion to their four-legged furry crew members and the extent we go to, to ensure our dogs are safe and comfortable onboard.

In this issue we meet Harley D, a well-known personality along the east coast of Australia. I have had the pleasure of spending time with this gentle sweet soul. She has a magical ability to melt your heart in the first second of meeting her.



**Introducing Harley D: A little dog with an enormous heart.**

**Doggy Name:** Harley D.

**Doggy Breed:** Maltese.

**Doggy Age:** 12 years old.

**Years Sailing:** 4.

**Places Sailed:** From Gold Coast to Cairns.



## How does Harley D handle sailing life?

At first, she was stressed and out of her comfort zone, now she only raises her head for treats and meal times. When anchoring, Harley is the first one beside the tender waiting for it to be lowered to go ashore for a long run on the beach.

## Biggest challenge?

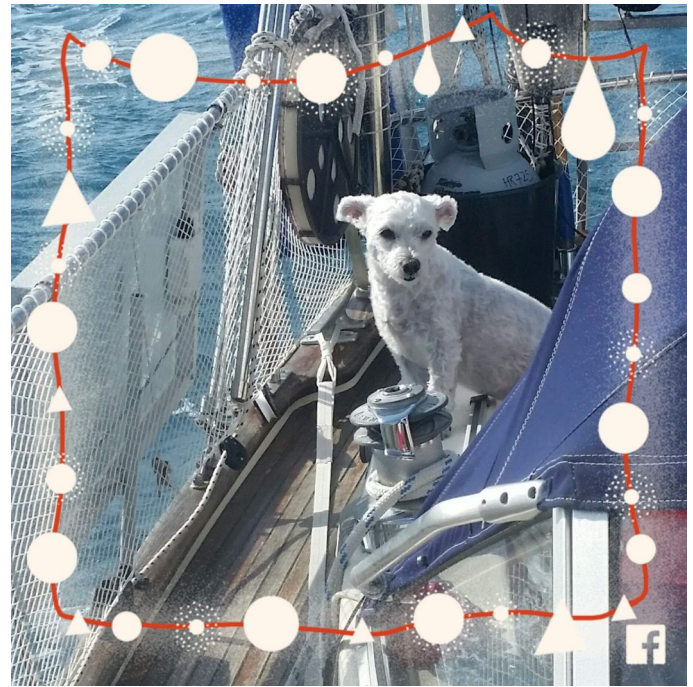
When her humans are stressed.

## How did you overcome/manage these challenges?

This is a work in progress. Harley's parents try to keep calm and not raise their voices to each other. In stressful moments they remind each other to be mindful of Harley.

## The most dog friendly places you've experienced on your travels?

Bundaberg, Tin Can Bay, Great Keppel Island, Mackay, and Townsville (Breakwater) and Cairns (Bluewater) Marinas get Harley's paw of approval. Magnetic Island is also another one of her favourite islands.



## Any tips on international travels?

Harley hasn't been overseas yet. Due to her age and Australia's strict quarantine conditions she will keep exploring the beautiful Aussie coast.

## What's the longest leg Harley has travelled and how do you manage her energy, toileting, and behaviour on these legs and keeping her safe on larger swells?







If this scheme didn't work, plan B was to have Harley's dad, Danny, show Harley how it was done. We all love our dogs who sail and will get creative to ensure their safety and comfort.

Harley always sails beside her parents. In large swells they give her extra cuddles and keep reassuring her in a calm and soothing tone that she is safe and protected. Tanya tells me that Harley's character is to take most things in her stride.

### **Have you made any modifications on your boat to accommodate Harley D?**

Harley is protected by the addition of safety netting to the lifelines all around the boat. She has a non-slip bath mat in the cockpit which she uses when sailing.

### **What advice would you like to share with others who have dogs who sail, or who are considering having a dog on a boat?**

Go for it! Tanya says having a dog on a boat can be time consuming but well worth the effort. They offer us unconditional love and loyalty. "Don't give up due to restrictions being enforced upon us by the

Harley sailed to the Gold Coast from Cairns in five weeks! Her owner Tanya Lee says, "it was a hard and arduous slog. We kept her energy up with trips to the beach/land whenever possible and long walks".

Before they set sail on this big adventure, Harley's mum captured Harley's urine when she went to the toilet on land and back on the boat, she poured it onto a mat of fake grass. Harley picked up the scent straight away. "Pees and poos the first day," Tanya says, "Winning!"



**Family photo.**



authorities. We have a vast coastline and there are plenty of options for sailing with dogs”.

Tanya also encourages others who are considering sailing with a dog to know that it is possible. “They are part of your family and you may regret leaving them behind. The amount of cruisers we have met that regret leaving their dog behind is significant after playing with Harley and receiving kisses and cuddles from her.”

### **Do:**

1. Establish toilet routines and persevere until accomplished. Treats help.
2. Prepare for dog medical concerns such as diarrhoea, vomiting and sea sickness.

Carry your dog’s medical history and vaccinations.

3. Show them love, give them reassurance and make them a part of your daily routine.

### **Don’t:**

1. Don’t isolate them, they are pack animals and you are their pack. Where you go, they go. If Harley can’t go, neither do her parents.
2. Don’t abuse the privilege of being allowed to have your dog in a marina. Pick up after them!
3. Don’t allow your stress to become theirs. They can sense something is wrong with you so if they get under your feet at an inappropriate time be nice and don’t yell at them. Reassure them it is alright.





## Harley's Medication:

Harley D has been diagnosed with Cushing's Disease which is managed with daily medication. Her parents have the medicine made up by a compounding pharmacist for pets who is happy to post the tablets to them wherever they are in Australia. There is nothing that is going to stop little Harley being a dog who sails.

## Last thoughts (from your dog's perspective):

I am your shadow, you are my pack master and I want to be beside all the time. Treats are good too!

For more doggy bios head to [www.dogswhosail.com](http://www.dogswhosail.com)

Fair winds and lots of salty doggy kisses.

*Tanya Rabe*



**TANYA RABE** co-founded *Dogs Who Sail* with her two Cocker Spaniels Maxy and Mel. What began as a space to share their own story as liveaboards has now grown into a global community of dogs on boats. Tanya devotes her life to caring for dogs, celebrating their individuality, and promoting responsible dog ownership. Ask to join Tanya's closed Facebook group *Dogs Who Sail*.

[www.dogswhosail.com](http://www.dogswhosail.com)

## Dogs Who Sail is dedicated to dogs on boats around the world

If you have a dog who sails and would like to connect with other dogs who sail then this is the place for you.

If you are thinking of getting a dog who sails but have a few questions then this is perfect for you too.

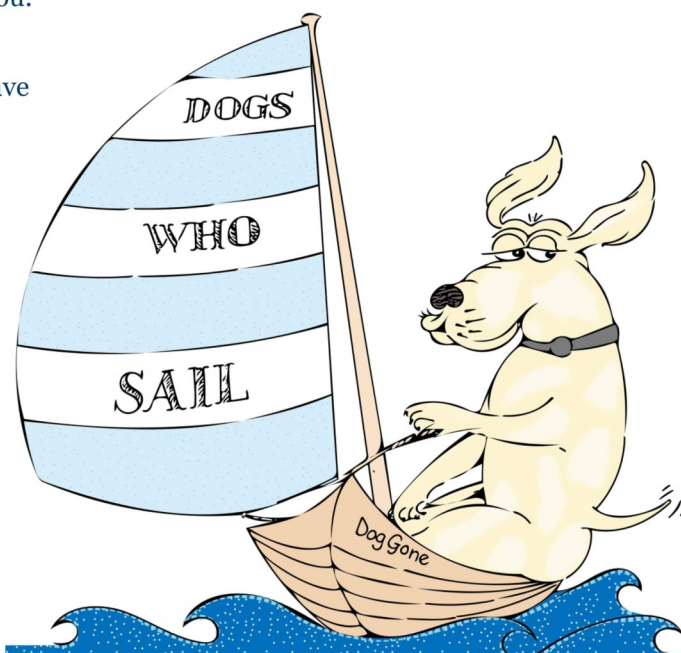
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# Flat bottomed girl

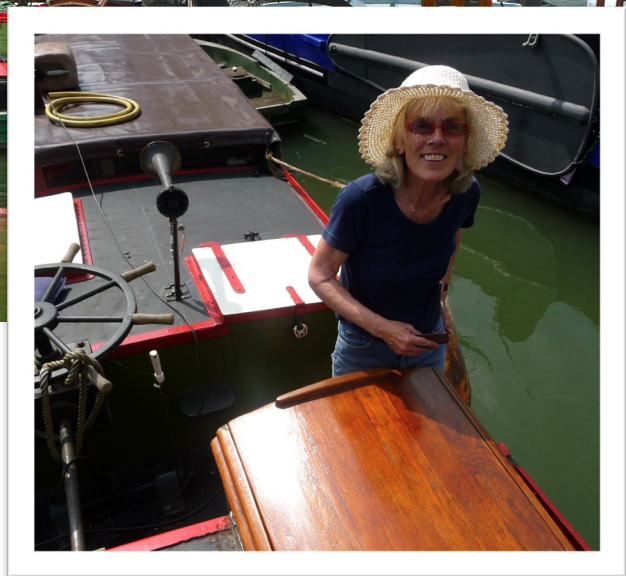
## Views from the canal

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

### The process of making everything ship-shape

The one aspect of owning a boat all of us who love the water share, is the need to keep our craft well-maintained and ship-shape. Whether we have a sailboat, a cruiser or a barge, we all know that every so often we have to have our craft lifted out of their natural environs and settled on land for a spell. However, that's where the similarity ends. The work involved in maintaining sailing or cruising boats is quite different from what's needed for a barge, especially a very old working barge like mine.

My old girl is 123 years old. Built in 1898, she was constructed by riveting iron plates to each other and then to the shaped ribs that gave the hull its form. When she was new, my *Vereeniging's* plates were 6mm thick. Over the last century, though, inevitable degradation of the metal has occurred, and the hull has become much thinner in places. Since I've been her custodian and caretaker, I've had her out of the water at least every two years. On each occasion there's been something to repair, patch up or replat. This is the nature



of the job I've taken on; keeping my piece of floating heritage maintained so that she remains a monument to Dutch waterways history for the country's future generations.

When I bought *Vereeniging* twenty years ago this year, her previous owner had done as much as he could to restore her from the wreck he'd found in an Amsterdam harbour. He knew she was unique. She was one of the first motorised barges ever built for the country's regular freight delivery network on the waterways. The family that owned her had long been in the transport business and until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they used barges towed by horses. But as soon as it was possible to commission the building of a motorised vessel, they ordered two or more motor barges to transport the goods they carried between Amsterdam and Utrecht on the river Vecht. I know there were more because *Vereeniging* was originally named *Loenen Amsterdam II*, so there was definitely at least one other. Then in the 1960s road transport took over from water traffic and *Vereeniging* and her siblings were either sold or put out to grass; in *Vereeniging's* case, it was



the latter.

For some years she was used as a holiday boat, but then she was left to disintegrate. The family didn't want to sell her for sentimental reasons, but no one could be bothered with her maintenance either. So when she was finally rescued in 1997, she was in very poor condition. The man I bought her from went a long way to restoring her. He rebuilt her superstructure and gave her back her original profile, but what I didn't know when I bought her from him was that he'd never had her out of the water.

It was my fault, I admit, but hindsight doesn't really help, does it? I made an assumption that as a former shipyard owner, a lift out would have been the first thing he'd organise. I mean after thirty years, surely anyone would realise she might have needed her bottom checking – especially as for much of that time her hull had remained open to the elements. But no. Sadly, the former owner never did. In fact, he never thought to tell me his focus had only been on the upper part of

the barge and on the engine. As might be expected, my first lift out for an insurance inspection was dramatic in its devastating results. The inspector arrived with his hammer and proceeded to knock holes in the hull along much of the length of the barge – below the water line on both sides. When I saw what he'd done, I was as much of a wreck as my boat.

“She's an iron ship,” the guilty seller told me later. “It didn't occur to me she would be rusty.”

I was staggered, but then I was to learn there's a perception among many skippers that if your barge is built of iron and not steel, it won't rust. I can definitely disabuse them of that idea.

*Vereeniging* is flat-bottomed, but there's a curved part that joins the sides of the hull to the bottom to form the bilges. It was this curved section that was the problem. It is vulnerable to knocks and in the past someone had used concrete to strengthen it inside the





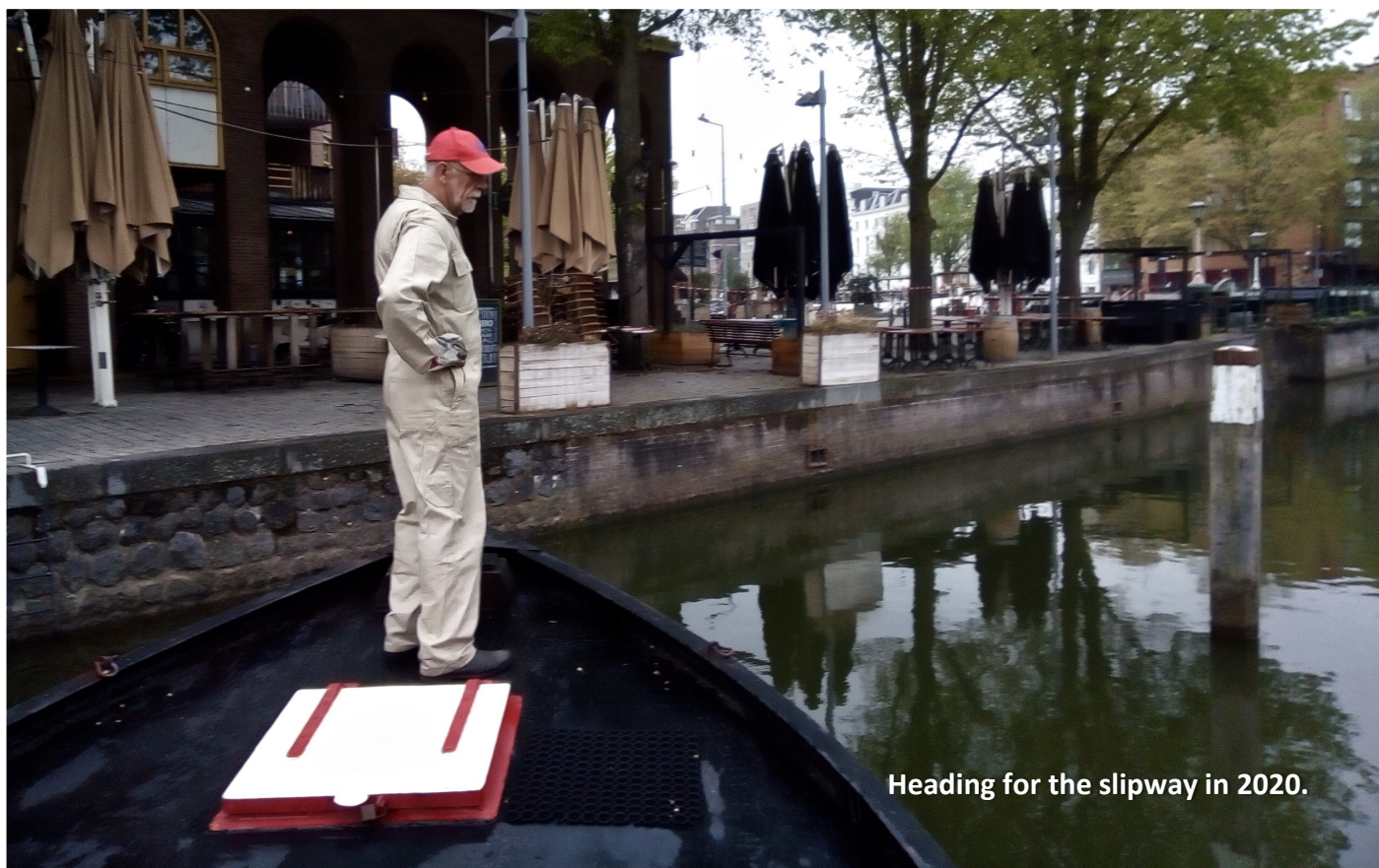


Waiting to be lifted out.

hull. Inevitably, during the years of neglect, water had seeped behind the concrete causing rust no one could see.

For me, this was more than just a hammer blow; it was a financial disaster because I

didn't have the money for the repairs and I only had a week on the slipway. But that was when our wonderful harbour community came to the rescue. At the time, there were several good welders among the residents and one after another they came to offer their



Heading for the slipway in 2020.





A sunset view of the slipway.



Vereniging's beautiful stern.





*Vereeniging when I bought her.*

help. As long as I bought the steel, they said, they'd repair my beautiful old lady – for free.

I couldn't believe my good fortune and even today I get quite emotional when I think about the heroes who saved me from ruin. For six days following the inspection, I had a team of four incredible friends cutting, shaping, fitting and welding steel plates to my *Vereeniging's* holey iron hull. In total, they applied 18 metres of steel, a mammoth task done with the most wonderful good spirit and generosity. I wasn't sure which of them I loved more during that week, but their help will never be forgotten.

Anyway, while they worked, I scurried round rolling tar substitute on all the sections between the new plates. When I wasn't rolling, I was providing regular trays of coffee, sandwiches and biscuits, and running

errands to fetch new welding rods, tools, and paint. As each plate was pronounced fixed, I painted it and I was still giving the upper hull a coat of black on the morning I was due to go off the slipway.

It was a mad, exhausting, terrifying, and exhilarating week. It was both awful and wonderful and while I never want to have to go through that level of anxiety again, I remember it with huge fondness as well. No other lift out has ever been as intense, thank heavens, although there've been a few worrying moments in between, mostly at inspection time. What it means, though, is that while I approach every lift out with some trepidation, I also do so with the pleasure of being able to enjoy the community spirit every spell on the slipway seems to engender.

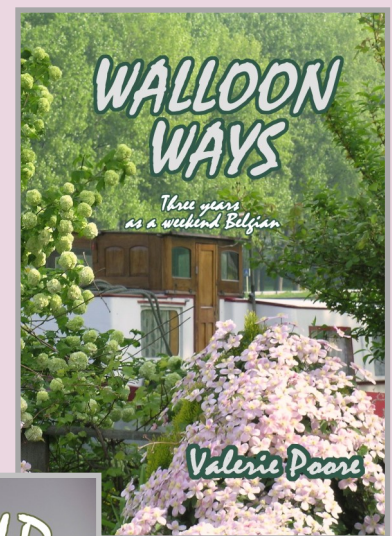
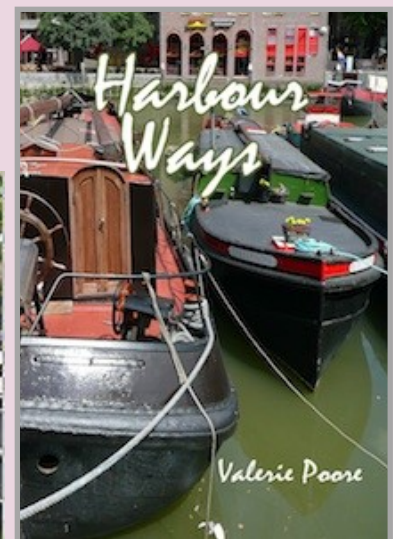
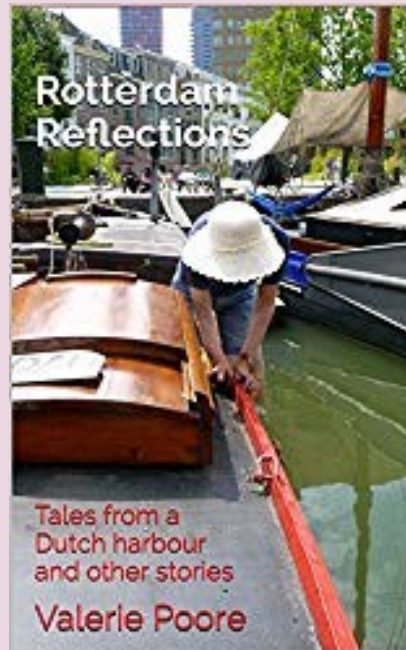
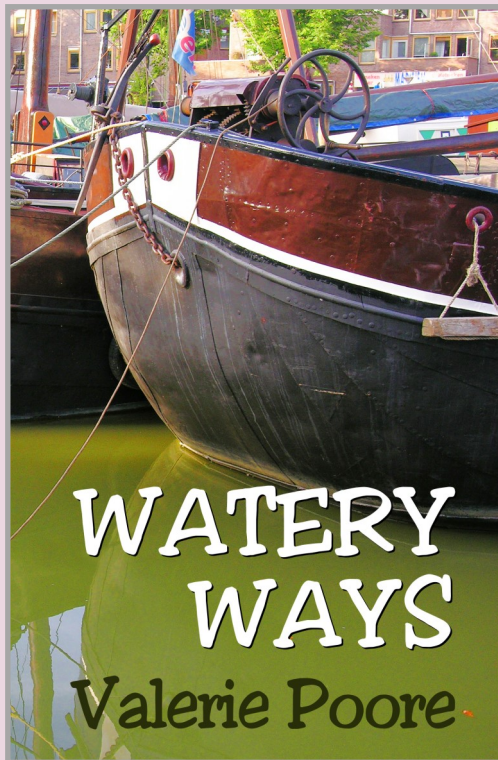
That reminds me. I need to book one for the end of this year. Fingers crossed it there'll be no nasty surprises this time!

[RIVERGIRL \(rivergirlrotterdam.blogspot.com\)](http://rivergirlrotterdam.blogspot.com)

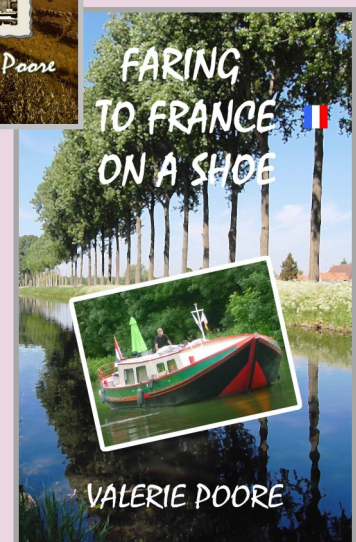
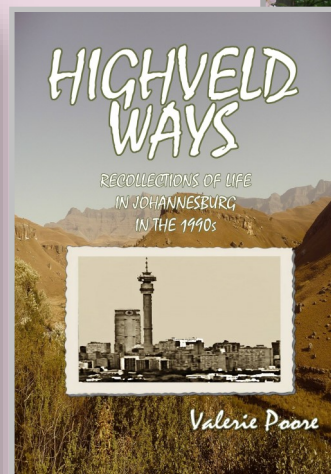
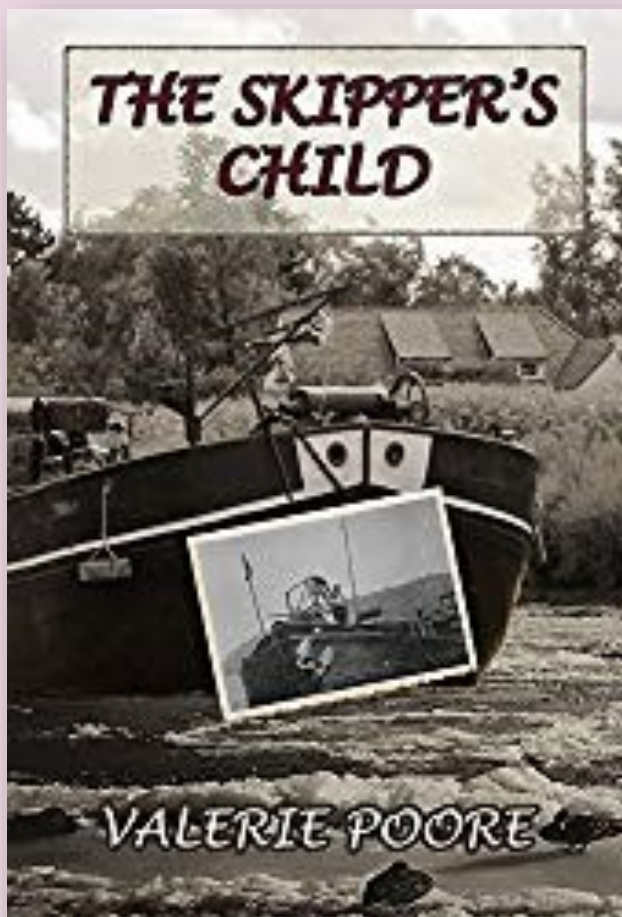


**VALERIE POORE** was born in London, England, and grew up in both north London and the west of Dorset. She moved to South Africa in 1981 but returned to Europe in 2001, which is when she began her love affair with the lovely Dutch flat-bottomed barges (hence the page title). She has lived on a barge in Rotterdam's Oude Haven since then, but summers see her and her partner on the Belgian and French canals. Val teaches writing skills at the local uni for a living, but has written several memoirs about her waterways life. Writing is a lifelong love as well as being her work.





Valerie's books can be found on  
Amazon.com





# **The boatyard**

**Another world,**

**Attack on the senses.**

**Sounds, smells, attitudes.**

**Boatyard becomes the whole world,**

**To venture outside it is disorientating.**

**Personalities,**

**Scraping, sanding, painting.**

**Compare notes, brands of antifoul,**

**Kindred spirits.**

**Those who choose or are forced by economics to do their own work**

**A special club,**

**Joined by an invisible thread,**

**A badge of honour.**

**Other owners wander in,**

**Checking progress.**

**Their boats delivered,**

**Like dogs at a grooming parlour**

**By Harriet Reid**



# Boatyard tradition: A coin under the mast

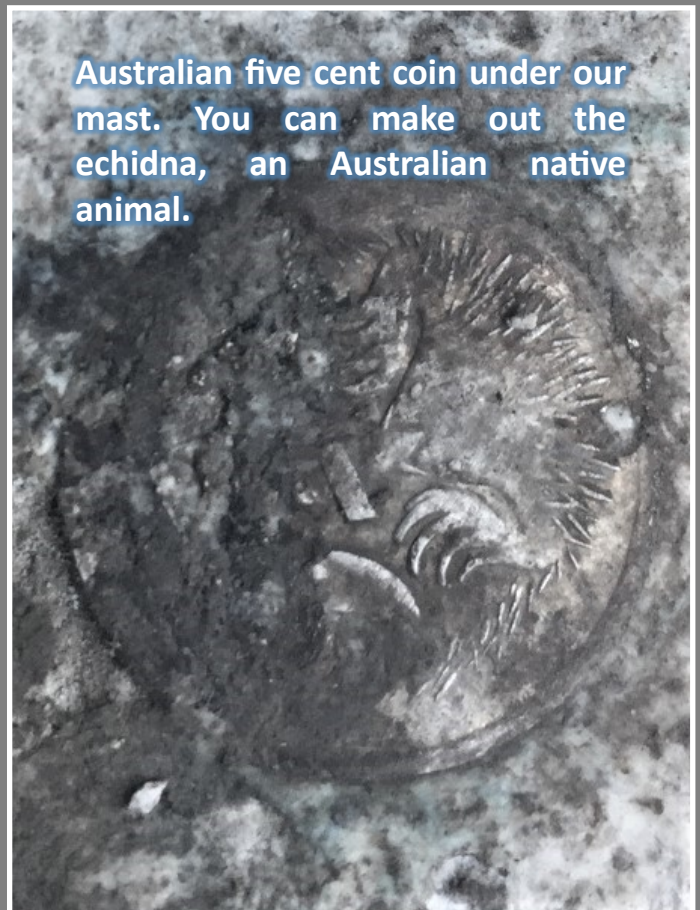
Shelley Wright

Most sailors embrace tradition. Twelve years ago when we took the mast on our current sailboat down to replace the standing rigging, I was delighted to hear that there was a coin under it. Sadly I didn't get to see the coin, an Australian five cent, at that time. Ten years later, when the standing rigging was due for replacement again, I was determined to see it.

The tradition dates back to at least Roman times, with coins found under the mast steps of ancient shipwrecks. Romans believed it was necessary to carry a coin in case the ship was sunk and the crew needed to pay the ferryman, Charon, to take their soul across the River Styx to their final resting place in the underworld.

In more recent times, shipbuilders placed a coin under the mast of a new ship as a type of blessing, a symbol of good luck.

Whatever you chose to believe, personally I think it's a charming tradition!







# SUSTAINABLE SAILING

## HEATHER FRANCIS

### In the Boatyard

Boatyards and sustainability – two words that you don't see often in the same sentence. In fact, I was hesitant to even tackle the topic, and believe me I have months of experience to draw on. From the grotty DIY yard in Panama where we had to BYO a toilet seat and shimmy past an angry guard chicken to use the bathroom, to an industrial drydock in busy Singapore that ran 24 hours a day. I have seen a lot when it comes to boatyard life. Yet, no matter where you haul out it is always the same routine: Haul out, get the work done fast, and get back in the water. The clock is ticking, the bills are piling up and often, so is the waste.

There is a reason the garbage bins in a boatyard are usually commercial trash skips. Almost every job we tackle in the yard involves harsh chemicals and leaves a trail of trash in its wake. Paints, solvents, resins, varnish, used oil, not to mention all the gear and consumables needed to use and apply

these things. So, how can we make time in the boatyard more sustainable?

This is a difficult question to answer, so much of what is used and discarded is necessary. The gloves and masks, the paint brushes and rollers, the drop sheets and soiled rags. I would be remiss to suggest that we should cut down on safety equipment – like the PPE we are all burning through during this pandemic, it is required to protect



Polishing the hull in the grotty DIY yard in Panama.



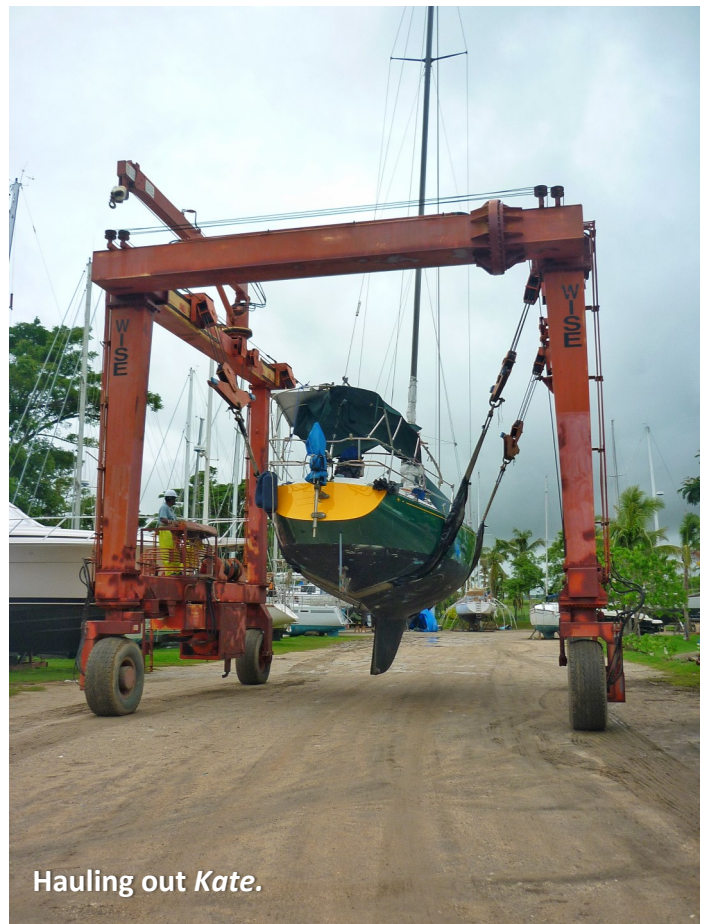
us. Handling chemicals with bare hands and breathing in fine dust particles when sanding things like fibreglass can have long term effects on your health. Safety equipment is necessary.

It is also hard to avoid the paints and other solvents that are needed to keep a boat maintained. There are low VOC paints, water-based varnishes, and more environmentally considerate options available now. However, even if these alternatives are not available there are ways that you can lower your impact while getting the work done.

Planning ahead and working efficiently is a good way to avoid some of the waste. For instance, if you have multi items to paint or varnish prep everything so you can apply a coat on all items at once. By working smart, you can minimize rollers, brushes, and clean up chemicals used, saving you money and creating less trash.

Practice proper disposal of waste products and always consider the environmental impact of your actions. When disposing of items like spent paint tins or soiled rollers make sure to do so in a properly allocated bin, if available. Same goes with dirty engine oil or fuel. If you can't find a proper bin, ask the yard office where and how they dispose of chemicals and think outside the fence. Old fuel or oil could be dropped off at a service station, half consumed but not needed items like paint can be donated to the local community.

In yards outside western countries, where environmental regulations and general health and safety considerations for local workers are not high priority it is easy to become complacent but it not excusable. In these situations, boat owners should set the example, following the practices that we would be expected to follow in our home countries. Take care of the workers you hire by supplying PPE if the yard doesn't. Never tip leftovers or waste products on the



Hauling out *Kate*.

ground.

## The Great Antifoul Debate

The most common reason for hauling out is to renew the antifoul. Antifoul, a paint used below the waterline, is a necessary evil on any boat that isn't stored on the hard between uses. Necessary because it discourages marine growth on the hull, and evil because it does so by using a combination of chemicals and metal compounds, some of which are shed into the marine environment over time. There are various brands and formulations



Hiring the pros to paint *Kate*, Fiji 2012.



available, dependant on the type of marine environment you sail in, as well as the regional environmental regulations. So, which is most effective? Which lasts longer? And, which is more environmentally sound?

For years onboard *Kate* we've used a hard epoxy antifoul and only recently switched to a soft, ablative paint as it was our only choice at the time. We usually opt for locally produced brands, many of which are not available outside the country where we bought them. This is a decision that is based both on the cost of the product and the theory that local boats use the local paint because it is formulated for, and works in, the local marine environment. We have sailed almost exclusively in tropical, open ocean conditions.

Outside this limited first-hand experience, I don't have enough knowledge to enter the great antifoul debate. But, what I do know is that paint manufacturers are in the business of selling their product. This is why they recommend renewing a boat's antifoul regularly, regardless of the condition of the paint. Ask fellow boaters, especially those who sail in locations where haul out facilities are few and far between, and they will most likely tell you they regularly get 18-24 months, maybe up to 36 months, out of an application of antifoul. In my opinion reducing the amount of a toxic product like antifoul used by boaters is perhaps the best way to a making necessary situation a little less evil. A simple way to reduce the amount of antifoul you use is to renew the paint when necessary, not when a set number of months have elapsed, and to keep your bottom well-maintained.

The first thing that is critical to getting the most out of antifoul paint is to make sure the product is applied properly to a clean and prepared bottom, as per manufacturers suggestions. This will ensure that you get good adhesion, and therefore longest wear. After that it is important to keep the antifoul well-maintained. That means taking a dip



**ABOVE:** Refinishing the cabin sole.

every month or two to check on growth, carefully cleaning off any stubborn oysters or coral before the colonies get too big to deal with, and to try and avoid abrasion from things like mooring lines. Just a small amount of attention from time to time can make a huge impact, both on the longevity of the antifoul and on the environment.

### Beyond Boat Work

Yes, the haul out is all about the boat, but it is also necessary to consider things beyond boat work. Looking after the physical and mental health of the crew will ensure jobs and days so smoother. This is especially important if you are planning a large refit or are DIY-ing most of work.

### Feed the Crew

You wouldn't set out on a road trip without topping up the tank, so make meal planning a priority during haul out. Keeping the crew well fed will maximize work performance and prevent short fuses or accidents due to low blood sugar. For those mid-morning munchies keep a variety of easy to grab snacks like granola bars and fruit on hand. Make lunch breaks a breeze by stocking up on sandwich fixings. Batch cooking dinner options at the beginning of the week will mean quick, healthy meals without anyone having to stand over a hot stove at the end of



a long day.

### *Splurge Sometimes*

It can feel like you're hemorrhaging money in the boatyard, but it's important to know when to penny pinch and when to splurge. Even if you are skilled, there are times when hiring help can save you time and money in the long run. Sending out laundry or having the occasional dinner ashore are ways to make the hard times just a little easier. And, if you are doing major jobs that will create a lot of mess and dirt down below, temporarily moving off the boat is a sensible splurge that will save your sanity.

### *Take a daily boat break*

In 2018 when our eight-week yard period in the Philippines stretched into eight-months, the constant talk about boat projects left us feeling worn down. We knew we needed a break. After our end of day shower Steve and I sat away from the boat with a couple coldies and banned talking about anything boat related for one hour. Our daily "boat free" ritual gave us a much-needed mental break, leaving us feeling refreshed and ready to take on another day.

### *Be Realistic*

Rarely does time in the yard go completely to plan, and often extra projects are discovered as you tackle your job list. We always expect our yard period to run overtime and over budget. Padding estimates of both cost and time gives us extra wiggle room and prevents too much stress when the intended splash date sails on by. Being realistic about what you can get accomplished while the boat is on the hard is important. Organize your job list, prioritizing projects that must get done to maintain the safety of the vessel and ranking



**ABOVE: Our first boatyard in San Diego 2008.**

cosmetic jobs like varnishing further down the list. And remember, there is always next haul out!

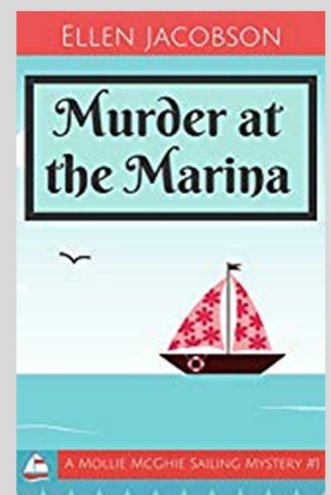
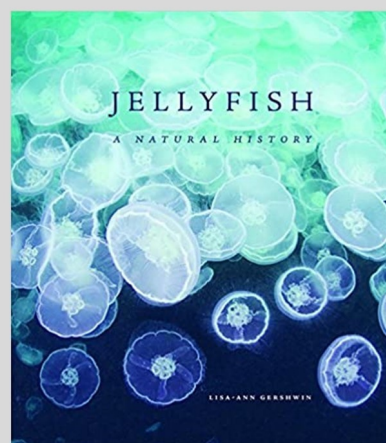
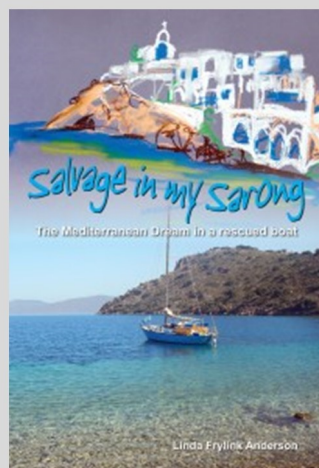
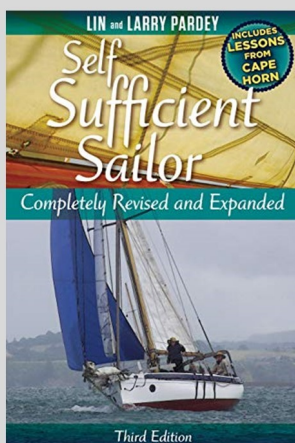
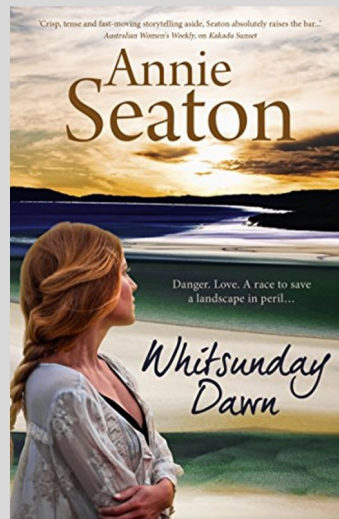
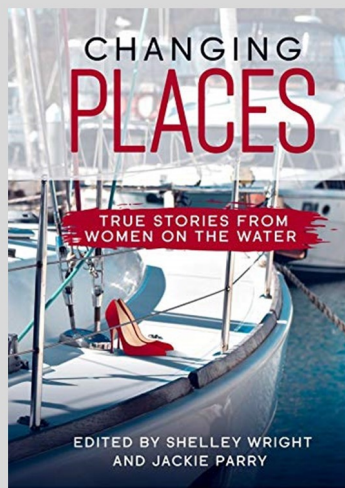
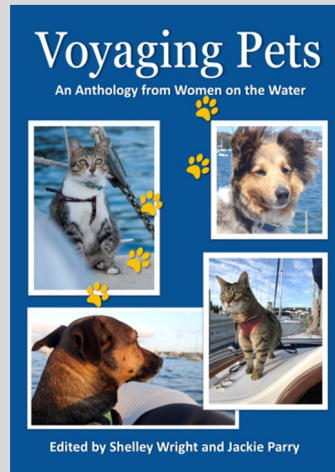
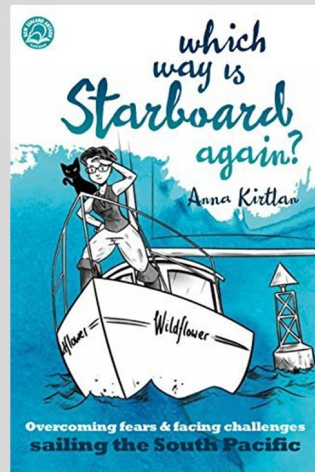
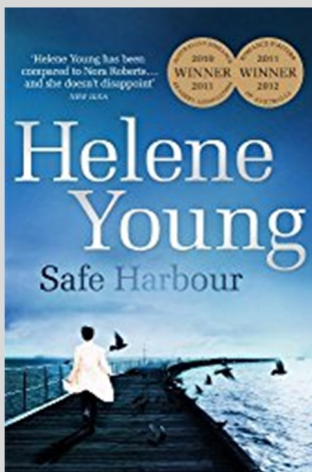


**Heather Francis is from Nova Scotia, Canada and has lived and worked on boats throughout the world. Since 2008 she has been living and sailing onboard *Kate*, a Newport 41 sloop, with her Aussie partner, Steve. She is a writer, photographer and cook who tries to live mindfully. Follow at [www.yachtkate.com](http://www.yachtkate.com) or [@sustainablesailing41](https://www.instagram.com/sustainablesailing41)**



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