

October 2019



SisterShip
women on the water

SALTWATER WOMAN

BEAUTIFUL KEPPEL BAY

Women's Health On Board Going Solo

REGATTA NEWS

- **Mud House Wines Women's Keelboat Regatta**
- **DBSC Women's Laser Regatta**

EXPERT TIPS FOR BOAT SHOPPING

Cruising the Coast of Scotland: Part 4

PLUS Barge Boats, Dogs Who Sail, Photos, and More!

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Published by: SeaScribe Pty Ltd.

ABN 636577789

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SisterShip Magazine is published online six times a year. Contributions are welcome. Please contact us for contributor guidelines.



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

LEFT: PIP SAWYER. Nothing like trying to beat the true wind! Sailing upwind in light airs on our Elliott Tourer 1350.

BELOW: PETREA McCARTHY. These are of me fitting a new forestay and furler on *Atlantic Clipper* at Shute Harbour (Photo credit: Colin Bell of Quadrant Marine). AUSTRALIA.





The bowsprit

From the editor

Going Solo!

Welcome to the October issue of *SisterShip Magazine*, where I am now officially alone at the helm!

As you may be aware, the *SisterShip* fleet expanded recently with launch of *SisterShip Training*. As a result, Jackie and I will take command of one vessel each, Jackie at the tiller of *SisterShip Training* and myself here at the helm of *SisterShip Magazine*. We'll be buddy-boating of course and you will still see Jackie within the magazine pages on a regular basis.

Far more impressive in terms of going solo is our October *Shero*, Sarah P. Gibson. Sarah was inspired by the true stories in our *SisterShip Press* anthology *Facing Fear Head On*. She describes her first solo adventure on Page 38 and we look forward to hearing more in the future!

Many Indigenous cultures have a close connection to the sea. Some, like the Polynesian wayfarers, are well known. Others, such as the Woppaburra people of Keppel Bay on the Southern Great Barrier Reef, less so. Senior Woppaburra woman, Christine Doherty is passionate about her saltwater

country and keeping the stories of her people alive. Chrissie shares her love of country, and photos from the recent NAIDOC celebrations on North Keppel Island (*Kanomi*), on Page 27. NAIDOC celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I hope to include many more Indigenous contributions in future issues so if you have any suggestions please let me know.

Last, but by no means least (and back to the going solo theme), congratulations to Jeanne Socrates on completing her latest solo circumnavigation aboard *SV Nereida*!

As always, look for the dolphin!

Shelley Wright



Women's Health On Board

Part 2

Heather Francis

Carolyn.

Medical Exams and Menopause

As we were preparing to shove off the dock in San Diego and sail towards Australia in 2009, I received a call from my gynecologist. The results of my recent pap smear were abnormal. It was a common occurrence she said, nothing to worry about. Then she recommended that I have another pap smear in six months.

I immediately began to worry. First about the irregular results, then about how and where I was going to get a follow up exam. There was no room in our meager budget for a flight home for a 15-minute appointment, I was going to have to figure it out along the way. But, a long list of concerns ran through my head; How would I find a good physician? What would the standard of hygiene be like? What if the doctor didn't speak English? How much would it cost? This was not an aspect of living on a boat that anyone had mentioned before.

FINDING A PHYSICIAN

It turns out there were gynecologists in Mexico. And Panama, French Polynesia, Palau, and the Philippines. In fact, since my boat is my only home, I have addressed

almost all my gynecological concerns over the past decade while we have been sailing. I have always found the doctors open to my inquiries, the staff caring and helpful, the facilities clean and, perhaps surprisingly, modern.

Jan, who is 61 and just finishing a 16-year circumnavigation, has also taken care of her health concerns while voyaging. She has seen doctors in Mexico, El Salvador, Colombia, New Zealand, and Malaysia, and said they were, "all good experiences—doctors were generous with their time and happy to answer any questions." Like me she found the care and facilities very good. "I was quite impressed that most doctors outside the US did an ultrasound on my uterus and ovaries. A doctor in Mexico was the first one to do that when we first started cruising, and he told me I had a fibroid tumor which may (or may not) have been the cause of my heavy periods and cramps. No US doctor had ever done an ultrasound on my uterus. Outside the US, the ultrasound was pretty much standard operating procedure."

It can be a daunting task to find a doctor when in a foreign port, but the Internet is making it easier. Many clinics will list doctors' qualifications, specialties, and patient reviews

on their websites. Cruiser forums are a good place to find recommendations from fellow sailors. For a more hands-on approach marina offices often have listing of local physicians, or the female staff can point you in the right direction. And, since we're all in the same boat, you can always look to the women in your anchorage.

MEDICAL EXPENSES AND INSURANCE

When I started sailing I carried private medical insurance, however like many of the women I spoke to it wasn't long before I noticed that the money spent each month vastly outweighed the cost of healthcare where we were sailing. Sheridan, who is sailing and surfing in Costa Rica, also works as a veterinarian. She looked into insurance that would cover her for all these activities and discovered that "once it begins to cover these things it is upwards of \$1500/year. I can get basic treatment in Costa Rica for that price before flying (home) to Australia for further treatments."

Danielle sailed with her husband and toddler son in Panama and says insurance "was about \$5000 for a family of three. We decided just to wear any medical expenses we might incur." Danielle also warns that some insurance policies may not cover things like contraception and pregnancy, or there may be a lengthy wait period before you are able to file a claim. It pays to read the fine print.

If you choose not to carry insurance, you should still include medical expenses as part of your onboard monthly budget. Medical costs will vary from country to country, but many women find that health care in the developing world is affordable, if not downright cheap. Jan reports that the doctors she saw were all "in the range of \$35-50 USD for a visit." Except a private specialist in NZ she saw to discuss and resolve menopause issues, "she was a bit expensive—about \$200 USD—but worth it." Making sure that you

have money reserved for regular check ups and exams, as well as medical emergencies, will make those doctors visits a little less stressful.

BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

Visits to the gynecologist are always a little nerve-racking but you shouldn't be intimidated to ask questions. However, it is easy to forget all the concerns you walked into the doctor's office with when you're laying half naked on that crunchy paper with your feet up in stirrups. Take a few moments before your appointment to write down a list of questions you want to discuss with your doctor. Also, take a pen to your appointment and jot down any important answers and information you don't want to forget.

Having copies of your past medical records to show the doctor will automatically fill in a lot of the gaps. Even if you are seeing a non-English speaking doctor, many medical terms and medications are the same in different languages. Carolyn, a nurse, suggests keeping both paper and electronic records. "I carry the DAN (Divers Alert Network) card with my vaccination records and documented history; allergies, surgical, medical, and genetic history. I emailed my Hotmail account with this information, so I can retrieve it anywhere."

It is important when trying to communicate in a foreign language to do a little homework. For instance, the Spanish word *embarazada* sounds like embarrassed but means pregnant. Get those mixed up and it could be an embarrassing situation indeed. With the world at our finger tips via the Internet it is easy to translate important terms to avoid confusion.

Kerstin, who had a reoccurring vaginal cyst that became painfully infected while sailing in remote French Polynesia, went one step further, she enlisted the help of a local. "I tried to push thru it, hoping it would resolve

on its own. When the decision was made to fly to Pape'ete, I got the name of a friend's doctor. My French is not very good and the doctors was so-so, but I was blessed to have a French friend, who is also a sailor and a nurse, meet me in Pape'ete and accompany me. The doctor was incredibly accommodating and sympathetic."

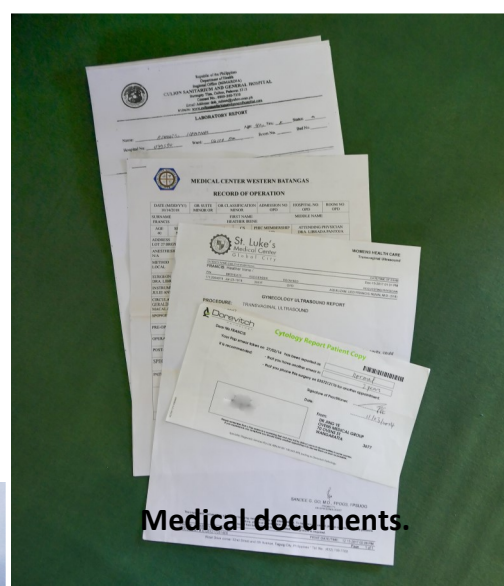
Being your own health advocate does not include playing doctor. Google is a powerful tool, but I can tell you from personal experience that no good will come of trying to cyber-diagnose your ailment. It can be tempting to try to figure things out yourself however, without proper medical training all you're likely to do is cause yourself more stress. Leave the diagnosis to the doctor and use Google to research things like medications and medical terms.

It is important to listen to your body and get to know what is 'normal' for you. That normal may change as you age but trust your instincts; if you feel like something isn't quite right, it probably isn't. If your doctor doesn't listen to your concerns, feel free to get a

second opinion.

NO BABY ONBOARD

Many people outside the western world have a more traditional view of family and the role women play. Being a woman who has spent her child bearing years consciously childless I have frequently found myself in situations where my choice was questioned. I have had islanders look at me with pity in their eyes and doctors assume I am unable to conceive rather than actively trying not to. However, nothing prepared me for the customs official in Papua New Guinea who leaned over our



arrival paperwork to tell Steve, “You still have time to find a woman who will give you babies. It’s ok, you don’t have to get rid of this wife.”

In the early years I bristled against these comments. Carolyn, who is now 52, admits “Earlier in age I would guiltily end with ‘I love children!’” A common response. Jan, who married at 41 got a little tired of the looks of shock and disbelief. “In some situations where I think I will get a negative reaction, I tell them that we have two sons (Rich has two sons), and I don’t mention that they are not biologically related to me.”

Thankfully, by the time we reached PNG I realized that the people who voiced these opinions found my choices just as foreign as I found theirs. I also realized that we visit places for such a brief time that it is impossible to understand of the intricacies of what is socially expected and acceptable. It is easier to let these kinds of comments and judgements roll off your back rather than let them get under your skin.

TIME TO PAUSE

I turned 40 last year, which has opened a whole new chapter when it comes to my health. Now there is the added responsibility of getting yearly mammograms and traversing the seldom spoken about years of perimenopause. I might be years from weathering the high seas of hormone shifts and hot flashes associated with menopause but, like many women, I was curious to know how women sailors cope.

“With the hormonal shifts I rest more” says Carolyn. “I have been saying “No” to high-impact activities. I ask myself: “Is this a real issue or is this my brain overreacting with hormones?” Self-realization helps, as does yoga and meditation.”

Jan was also willing to share her experience. “I was very lucky that my hot flashes were

not too bad, and it really did not affect my regular routine at sea. My biggest issue was the vaginal dryness that came with menopause, and normal lubricants did not really help. Talk about a sex spoiler! Although none of my friends told me about this, when I started asking a few of them about it, I found that they also suffered from the same problem.”

These women have proven again that there is a vast network of sailors out there going through similar experiences who are willing to share, support, and comfort one another. No woman needs to feel alone or embarrassed when it comes to their health and well being. The body is the vessel of the soul, and one that deserves to be well taken care of. Asking for guidance can be difficult, but you wouldn’t leave port without a chart, so why expect to navigate the crazy adventure called life without a little help.



HEATHER FRANCIS is originally from Nova Scotia, Canada. She and her Aussie partner, Steve, bought their Newport 41, *Kate*, in California in 2008 and have been sailing fulltime since. They are currently in the Philippines looking for wind. You can follow their adventures at: www.yachtkate.com

When Farewell Means Au Revoir

Gina de Vere

One of the few downsides in the cruising life is saying goodbye, not only to old friends but also to newly made friends, friends you think you may never see again. Firstly, there are the friends and family who say farewell and *bon voyage* when you leave home shores. It could be many years, or even never, before you see them again. These friends have created a community for you. Perhaps you are part of a book club, sports club, sailing club, mother's help at your child's school, or simply friends made as you go for walks or

shopping. Even being served by the same check-out girl creates a bond of sorts. These familiar encounters are a thing of the past and it can be tough saying goodbye to your home community, but you are starting your new adventure and will make new friends along the way.

I was so full of the coming adventure that I wasn't thinking about friendships or missing my family when we set sail from New Zealand to cross the Pacific in April 2005.



Church in Sikka.

And anyway, I had my best friend right next to me, in our 40-foot monohull sailboat, for better and for worse, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. Then of course, I had no idea we would be sailing for over 15 years full time and not returning to New Zealand.

In Tonga we met people on several boats that had sailed there in a rally and we count one couple our friends today. But on the whole, we did not make any friends until we anchored in the Brisbane River in Australia. Here we were immediately engulfed in the

squabbles, the fun, and the ups and downs of fellow boaties on the pile moorings. When our work contracts finished we were ready to sail on, this time on a rally from Darwin to Malaysia in 2012. Many farewell parties were held and many pledges to stay in contact were made as we said farewell to our new friends, never expecting to visit Brisbane again.

Sailing from Darwin to Kupang we met a couple on their catamaran *Seadragon II*, that we had seen being built in Maryborough, and they became sailing buddies for the voyage. Instead of following the majority of boats on the rally we decided to visit East Nusa Tenggara to have a brief look at the island of Flores, making Larantuka our anchorage (Latitude 8° 20' S, Longitude 122° 49' E). There we found a picture-book perfect cone of a mountain (Ili Mandiri, 1510 m) with villages nestled at its base close to the sea. We dropped anchor on a narrow shelf as the channel is deep with strong currents.

There were fishing boats big and small along the coast, as well as trading boats loading and offloading, for this is a busy little port. However, what caught our eyes most were



Harbour in Larantuka.

neither the boats, nor the stunning setting, but the pretty white and cream churches complete with spires and neat gardens that lined the seafront to the port side when approaching. Flores is very much a Catholic island where Muslims are in the minority. This is due to the influence of the Portuguese colonists of the 16th Century but apart from some Portuguese sounding names there is not much else to remind one of these times.

Naturally, as we were the only two yachts there, everyone knew about our arrival and before long there was a man waving at us from shore. This was Luis (Wizz) Kedang, a guide who spoke a little English. We went ashore, asking to see the head man so we could introduce ourselves. It was arranged that we would have afternoon tea with the *Bupati*, or Governor, of the island. He was very gracious and although he said he did not speak much English I suspect he understood more. We were served tea and coffee from his own estate, in fine bone china, together with little sticky cakes that are a local delicacy. We were generally made to feel extremely welcome. That night Wizz took us along to a national celebration where his

village and his clan made us sit with them and fed us, although we declined the dog stew saying we only ate fish. We met the *Bupati* again, leading a dance. He insisted we joined the circle dance which had some fancy footwork that we never mastered, much to the amusement of all. The next day we were taken over a high hill to swim in an extinct caldera with bubbles coming up from the dark depths. Later in the evening we were



Wizz and Shandy.

View east from Larantuka.



Rainbow Orphanage: Christian with kids.



invited to the house of the head of the Kedang clan. This was very formal to begin with as we were solemnly presented with gilt framed photographs of the entire family and a beautifully printed certificate to say we were now part of the Kedang Clan and belonged to their village. We are now family. After several glasses, men only, of homemade Arak the group became a lot less formal and somehow, even with no Bahasa

Rako Beach.



Indonesia, we managed to communicate and share many laughs.

There was just time for us to visit the local orphanage, The Rainbow Orphanage, with Sister Jacinta at the helm. The 60 children sang for us and we gave them all the tee shirts, books, and pens we brought. The government had stopped supporting orphanages, so they created businesses to help support themselves. Sister Jacinta showed us around the workshop where they made candles; the sewing room where they sew school uniforms; their large garden; and



Sister Jacinta with Wizz, Shandy, and Gina.

the traditional weaving being done for tourists. What stayed with me however, was how bare and cheerless the dormitories were; no children's posters, drawings, or decoration of any sort. When it came time to up anchor, it was a very sad farewell. We could not see how we could ever return, but life has its surprises!

Since then we have been exploring South East Asia, and in Malaysia we decided to sell our steel boat and buy a light displacement fibreglass 47.2-foot monohull, *Stardancer*. We had seen her in Papua New Guinea and knew her quite well. We flew to Gosford, Australia, to sail her back in 2013, joining another rally. Alas, as we approached Queensland's Fraser Island the weather packed up. We decided it was safer to go around the east of the island rather than over

Gina and Christian biking in Flores 2019.



quilts in storage. I persuaded them to give them to me to donate to the orphanage in Larantuka because the children complained of the cold in the winter. As you may imagine on this our second visit, we were warmly welcomed and the children had learned a new song for us. Even though times were tough we were given their best fruits from the trees and vegetables from the gardens. Our time there flew by and before we knew it, it was time to say goodbye again as we carried on sailing to Belitung and up to Thailand.

We truly couldn't see ourselves ever going back to see the Kedang family, but life had other plans for us. Thanks to Christian's new love of motorbikes we returned overland this year, 2019. We left *Stardancer* in the marina in Langkawi in the wet season to fly to Bali, their dry season, where Christian rented a motorbike and biked across Bali to Lombok, by ferry to Sumbawa, rode beneath the

the notorious Wide Bay Bar. Then the automatic pilot chose to stop. After hours of hand steering in bad weather and singing every Beatles song we knew to stay awake, we were very relieved when the port of Bundaberg came into sight. There I met a woman sailor who belonged to a local quilting group who told me they had 12

Leaving, 2005.



volcanoes to get the nine hour ferry to Labuan Bajo, and then across Flores from west to east to Maumere, where I flew in and met him. A round trip of 5000 km!

It was so good to see Wizz again, and his new wife Shandy. They biked with us to Larantuka to spend time with the family again, visit the orphanage, and do some sightseeing. A highlight was going up Mt Kelimutu (1640 m) to see the three different coloured lakes.

There is just so much to see in beautiful Flores with its lovely people that I have no doubt that we will find a way to come back again, so it was not farewell but *au revoir*, until the next time we meet. If you happen to be sailing that way the orphanage needs plain red, mustard, brown, blue, and white fabric to sew school uniforms for the children please. You will be assured of a very warm welcome!

With the advent of Facebook it is now easier to stay in touch with friends you make along the way, or who knows, you might very well sail into a bay and there are friends you met many sea miles ago! Soon it will be time for us to leave the marina and continue our sailing adventures. I shall miss the community of sailors here but I know I can find a supportive community wherever there are sailors, or with local people at the places we visit—I just have to make it happen. I belong to more groups on Facebook now so I can follow my hobbies and interests; an online art group, a ‘women who sail who sew group’, a writer’s group, and so on. My need

for community is different and I now know I can create the environment I want so I can happily continue cruising and enjoying this fantastic way of life. If perhaps you are feeling the lack of being part of a community, know there are probably other sailing women feeling just the same, so be brave, put the word out and start one.

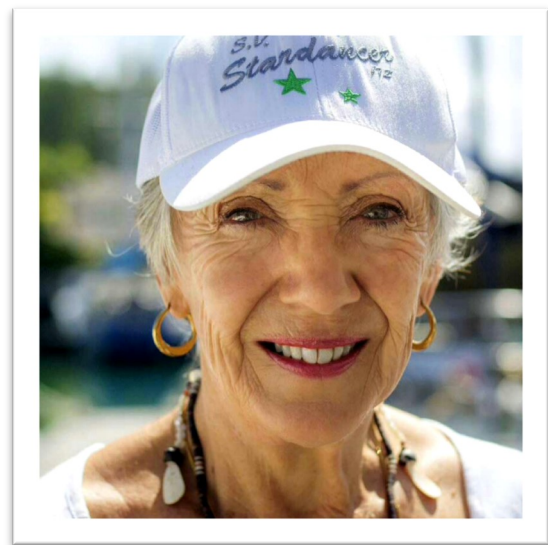
The sailing life is full of wonderful surprises and I look forward to making more friends next year as we sail *Stardancer* to Sumatra, then onto the Anambas and Natuna Islands in the South China Sea, across to East Malaysia and Borneo, down to Sulawesi and over to the Spice Islands. I have learned not to say farewell or goodbye, but *au revoir* or *arrivederci*, for who knows where we shall meet again, sometime, somewhere!

Website: <https://www.bluewaterwomen.com>

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A New Zealander by birth, GINA DE VERE has been sailing full time on her monohull, a Gib Sea 47.2 with her husband Christian Selaries for the past 15 years. They set sail from NZ in 2005, sailing the South Pacific, Papua New Guinea twice, Australia to Indonesia twice, exploring Borneo, Thailand and Malaysia, and the South China Sea.

Sailing was a huge change from the career Gina enjoyed as university lecturer in marketing , innovation, and entrepreneurship, and as CEO of her business consultancy, Masters Consulting. She continues her work as Life Coach. Her newest adventure is as book author, having previously had articles published in sailing magazines in Germany, USA, Australia, and NZ. Gina’s aim in life is to inspire and support women in particular, to make the ‘leap’ to a more adventurous, fulfilling life.

40 INSPIRATIONAL SAILOR WOMEN

ONE MUST-READ BOOK BY GINA DE VERE.



AVAILABLE NOW

AT ALL GOOD BOOK STORES

bluewaterwomen.com

Yoga4Yachties



Hi, I'm Leanne Hembrow, John and I run the 'Down Under Rally' but I am also known as Yoga4Yachties. I have been a practicing yogi on board our sailing vessels for 10 years travelling ports of the world and a qualified Yoga Teacher since 2013.

I share my love of Yoga with Down Under Rally Participants and my Sailing Community in various anchorages from Australia to Fiji, check out my website www.yoga4yachties.com to join one of my Yoga Retreats and see my yearly class schedule. Our Catamaran Songlines displays my Yoga4Yachties Logo, please come and say "Hi" if we are anchored nearby, I would love to share a class with you.

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A full house on the start line at the second annual DBSC Women's Laser Regatta (Jon West).

Second Women's Laser Regatta an unmitigated success

Held over two days on the weekend of 28-29 September, the Women's Laser Regatta, hosted by Double Bay Sailing Club, was an unmitigated success, attended and coached by some of Australia's highest profile sailors, mixed with keen young sailors on their way up.

The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP, Member for Vacluse, and Andrew Cox, Commodore of Double Bay Sailing Club officially opened the regatta, while Mayor of Woollahra Municipal Council, Susan Wynne, presided over the prize presentation.

Run, coached, and competed in by women and girls on Sydney Harbour, the intention of the regatta is to encourage greater female

participation in the Laser class. The Club's ethos is based on volunteering, and this came through with a lot of the membership involved and supporting the event.

In only its second year, co-organisers, Clare Alexander, Christine Patton, and Christine Linhart were thrilled by the number of those wanting to attend.

Patton commented, "We were over-subscribed this year. When we started the event last year, we couldn't have guessed how popular it would become so quickly."

Eminent coaches included Karyn Gojnick, a triple Olympian; Krystal Weir, a double Olympian, and Katie Spithill, a multiple international and national Women's Match Racing champion from youth to adulthood. Spithill also finished second overall in the 2018 Rolex Sydney Hobart as tactician on Wild Oats X.

The trio was joined by DBSC's Marlena

Berzins, a former Australian Sailing Squad member in the Laser Radial, and Charlotte Alexander, an up-and-coming match racer with wins to her name. Louise Davis, an experienced International Race Officer from Brisbane, flew in to preside as Race Officer.

The two-day event comprised yoga each morning; an on and off the water coaching clinic; debrief and Q&A; dinner at DBSC; racing all Sunday, and the prize giving.

Among the entries was Australian Sailing Team member and Tokyo Olympic Games campaigner in the Laser Radial class, Mara Stransky. The 20 year-old Queenslander won the event, although it was not all about winning.

“I thought I’d come down and see how the younger girls are progressing and share some insights with them,” Stransky said.

“I’m impressed by the younger girls (the

AST Tokyo Olympics campaigner Mara Stransky attended (Jon West).



majority were from the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and DBSC). They have a good work ethic and they’re disciplined.”



Racing on Day 2. DBSC Women's Laser Regatta 2019 (Darcie Collington).

Karyn Gojnich, from RSYS herself, responded: “They’ve been training all winter under the guidance of Marlena (Berzins) and Mike Leigh (an Olympian). I think our girls gave Mara a run for her money.

“It was an amazing weekend. The organisers did a fabulous job in bringing it together; a small club like this putting on such a big event.”

Katie Spithill agreed. “Everyone seemed to love it and already there has been discussion about next year. We had five coaches for 50 boats, so each coach looked after 10 sailors. Krystal (Weir) likened it to a gym circuit – everyone got to see every coach in rotation. Today, on the water, we again looked after 10 sailors each. It was successful,” she said.

Fifth placegetter for the racing component was 2016 Grand Masters Laser Radial Open world champion and newly crowned Women’s Grand Masters world champion, Vanessa Dudley, who is also an ocean racer with 23 Sydney Hobarts behind her, including last year with Spithill on Wild Oats

X.

“Today was a great day’s sailing and coaching yesterday was just as good. It’s been a worthwhile weekend,” Dudley said. “I found the girls from the Squaddy (RSYS) were very good and it was great to have Mara (Stransky) here. The effort that the Club put into it was really good.”

Entrants came from NSW, Queensland, Tasmania and ACT, with Cleo Boyd flying in from New Zealand.

Special thanks go to Woollahra Council and NSW Laser Association (assistance with coaching costs); Musto (donation of regatta tee-shirts); NB Sailsports, major supplier to the dinghy or off-the-beach racing classes in Australia (sponsorship of regatta bibs and their Laser truck onsite).

Full results and all information: <http://www.dbsc.com.au/womens-laser-regatta>

Coaches Krystal Weir, Marlena Berzins, Charlotte Alexander, Katie Spithill, and Karyn Gojnich.





Flat bottomed girl

Views from the canal

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

SUMMER ADVENTURES OF THE WATERY KIND

Summer is the time for cruising, right? Well, yes. Under normal circumstances, this is what we would have been doing during the holidays. Sadly, though, this year it wasn't meant to be.

Owing to an oil leak that was more like a major haemorrhage, we've had engine problems on our barge that we couldn't solve in time for our usual six weeks away, meaning we've had to stay harbour-bound this season. We were naturally disappointed (devastated, actually), but deciding not to be completely daunted we started investigating to see if we could have other boating adventures instead. Out came Google (our modern-day guide to everything) and we started looking for possible alternatives.

For many years, we've dreamed of going to Poland by boat, but the fates have consistently conspired against us and despite the best laid plans, we've never managed to even get started in that direction. We have, however, spent the last three summers in Belgium and France where we've experienced



some very special waterways marvels, including the massive 72-metre boat lift at Strépy in Belgium and the historic boat lifts Strépy replaced. We've also been down the huge inclined plane at Ronquières (also in Belgium), a manmade 'slipway' with rails on it to carry boats up (or down) from one section of canal to the next. These experiences have given us a taste for adventure and we really couldn't countenance a whole year without any boating at all.

Imagine our delight when our research turned up a YouTube video about the monumental Elbląg Canal which has not just one, but five inclined planes. The Ronquières plane has a 1400-metre long slope on which vast basins of water (91 m x 12 m), called *caissons*, contain the boats and barges being transported up and down a height difference of 68 m. Those at Elbląg, however, have five shorter slopes to lift boats approximately 100m over a distance of 9.5 km. The other difference from Ronquières is that at Elbląg the boats are transported in cradles and not in basins of water. From both an engineering and historical perspective, it looked both fascinating and very beautiful and we were



excited to see we could go on an excursion on the canal if we could get ourselves to Poland.

The video made it look enchanting and I was itching to do the trip. What made it even more appealing was that we knew we wouldn't be able to do it on our own boat. The width of the cradles at their base is too narrow for our flat-bottomed barge; they have a maximum width of 2.6 m at the base. We have 3.2 m and know we don't fit. Given that we couldn't go anywhere on our own barge this year, it seemed like an ideal opportunity to tick this item off the bucket list and go to Poland.

We booked our flights to Gdansk and then tickets on the passenger boat leaving the city of Elblag on a Friday morning at the end of August, believing the tourist rush would be over. How wrong we were. When we arrived on the appointed morning, we were surprised to find that the boat was already full, even though it was a weekday at the end of the holidays. It seems that such is the popularity of the 36-kilometre trip, Polish tourists were lining up early to secure a place on the viewing deck. Luckily, the weather was

gorgeous and although we didn't have a seat, it was no punishment to be sitting on the bare deck as we pulled away.

From Elblag to the first inclined plane is probably about 20-25 km, although I can't be sure of that. We travelled the course of a long stretch of beautiful rural water until we reached Lake Druzno, a magical haven for nature and bird life. The surface of the water was covered in lilies with ducks and every kind of wader and diver taking full advantage of the numerous islands of weed and reed. It took quite some time to traverse the lake, and then we were back on the pretty tree-lined canal. We passed charming houses and gardens with friendly folk waving at us from the bank and continued on until we approached the first of the inclined planes.

I must admit that even though I'd watched the whole procedure on video, there was nothing quite like experiencing it in practice. It was fascinating, exciting and just a tad scary too, considering the whole structure was built in the 1840s and was seriously old.

Firstly, the skipper manoeuvred the boat into the iron-framed cradle, which was sitting under water and only visible from its wooden

walkway and handrail. As soon as the crew had secured the boat, the operator set the pulleys and cables in motion that hauled the cradle (and us) out of the water and up to the top of the slope. The whole system is driven by a huge water wheel that keeps the pulleys turning. It was truly awe-inspiring to see it all working. I am always intrigued by mechanical structures and Elblag's inclined planes are wonderful examples of great canal engineering that needs no energy other than its own water to operate the system. The beauty of being able to see and understand how it works is immensely satisfying.

I'll confess that I was more than a bit nervous on the first of the slopes. My 'what if' tendency was working overtime. What if the cables broke? What if we were de-railed? What if the cradle itself collapsed? But by the third of the inclined planes, my 'what if' voice was becoming tiresome and I was feeling more confident. Added to that, the



breathhtaking scenery distracted me anyway. I had no idea northern Poland was so beautiful and the higher we rose, the more evident this became with perfect views of rolling, golden hills and tree-studded valleys.

Each plane is separated from the next by a couple of kilometres of lovely winding waterway, so at the top of the fifth plane, I was sorry we'd come to the end of the line





and wished we'd booked to do the return journey too, or even just continue. How lovely it would have been to travel further along that enticing canal. Maybe, we said, we can hire a boat and do the rest of it one day. A small cruiser would be perfect for pottering along through the trees to the end of the Elbląg Canal navigation at Ostroda. We can but dream.

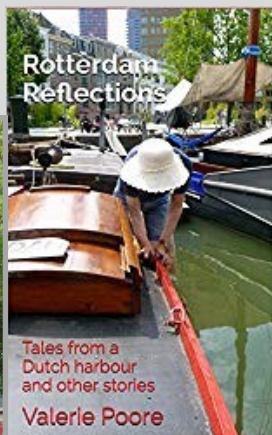
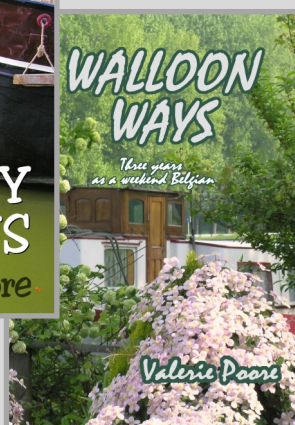
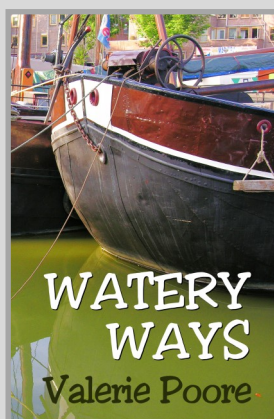
To finish off our foray into Poland, we also did a boat trip at Toruń, a gorgeous medieval town on the Vistula river, and another from Gdynia on the coast to the peninsula of Hel – just to say we'd been to Hel and back, of course.

So, whatever our hiccups on the home front, we've had our share of watery adventures this summer, and what these show more than anything is that Europe is incredibly rich in waterways marvels. When I think of the inclined planes of both Elbląg in Poland and Ronquières in Belgium, a country that boasts

the great new boat lift and the historic monuments too, I am so grateful I've been able to see and experience them all first hand. Being a flat-bottomed girl has given me all this and more. Pretty lucky, huh?



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 at the following Amazon links:

Harbour Ways: <https://geni.us/CkA1N91>

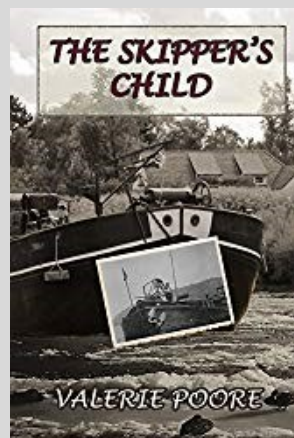
Walloon Ways: <http://geni.us/1CDTu>

Faring to France on a Shoe: <http://geni.us/AOt9kT>

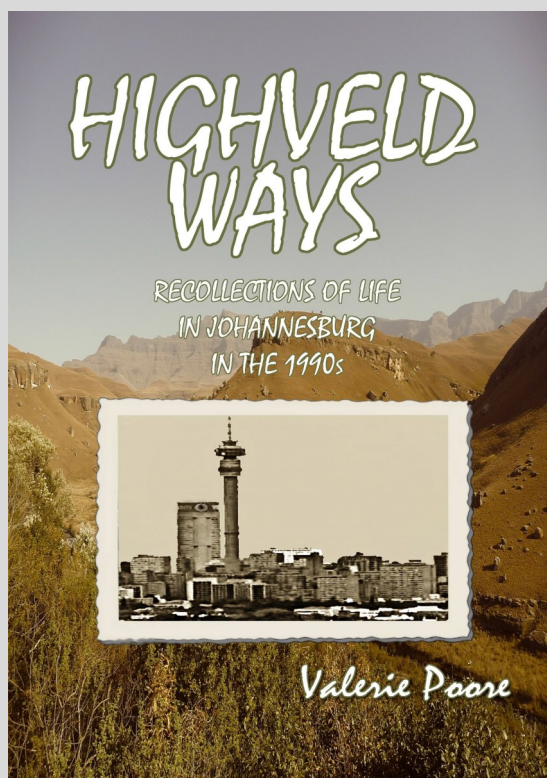
Rotterdam Reflections: <http://geni.us/5pSxcgs>

The Skipper's Child: <http://geni.us/PBwQnP>

Watery Ways: <http://geni.us/lusDZT>



New from Valerie Poore....



This is the third book about the author's life in South Africa. In Highveld Ways, Valerie and her children join her husband in Johannesburg and begin a decade of life in and around the city. During the years that follow her arrival in 1989, Valerie explores the Highveld area on which Johannesburg is built and learns to love every aspect of South Africa's biggest, baddest city. The family move house five times and each new home brings its own memories and adventures, along with trips to Namibia, Zimbabwe and other parts of South Africa. The backcloth to this memoir is the turbulent political upheaval of the early 90s as well as the emergence of the New South Africa under Nelson Mandela. While no story about South Africa at the time can escape the often violent lead-up to the changes, Valerie's memories are focused on the events, the places and above all, the people who filled her life at the time.

The Road Less Travelled

JUDITH MAIZEY

Looking from Putney Beach to Middle Island.



It's a toss-up as to whether I like the Whitsundays or the Keppels better.

For many, the Whitsundays is the iconic destination for boaties. With 74 different islands and a range of anchorages for snorkelling, fishing, walks and beaches, the Whitsundays ticks all the boxes. There's fabulous Airlie Beach and glamorous Hamilton Island if you want some land time or need to reprovision.

With so many islands, and one of its beaches, Whitehaven, rated as one of the best in the world, it's not surprising that the Whitsundays attracts boats ranging from the ubiquitous cruise ships and high speed luxury vessels to sailing catamarans and yachts, powerboats, and the inescapable jet skis. It's also a popular place for people to book from the area's huge fleet of charter boats—and there's the rub. As its popularity increases through clever marketing campaigns, there are not too many places left in the Whitsundays these days where you can get away from the masses.

My husband, Keith Adams, and I have been cruising, not sailing, the Queensland coast for the past five years. While this is not a lot of time compared to other boaties, it has given us a pretty good appreciation of what we like and don't like in an anchorage. When we first started north in 2014, one of our favourite anchorages in the Whitsundays was Macona Inlet on Hook Island. Clear blue water, with a little beach and beautiful reefs to snorkel around or paddle over at high tide. And, best of all, only a few boats ever anchored there each night. But as each year has passed that lovely spot has become busier.

Living aboard a 52-foot Seahorse trawler-style cruiser, we are not keen on too much wind and the Whitsundays are nicknamed “the windy Whitsundays” for good reason—which is great for the sailing fraternity, but not so good for those of us who don't rely on the wind for our journey.

Which brings me to the Keppels and the waters not too far from this group on the Capricorn Coast. This region was famous in the 1980s for the slogan “get wrecked on

Great Keppel” when there was a large party resort on the island. The resort is still there but like many island resorts along the Queensland coast, it is literally ‘wrecked’ and has been since it was closed in 2008 by Sydney-based owner, Tower Holdings.

The waters of GKI are the epitome of crystal clear. The island has 17 squeaky clean sand beaches, and its coral reefs are as good, if not better, than those in the Whitsundays. The bush walks are delightfully scenic and get the heart pumping.



The old homestead at GKI.

This year, instead of venturing all the way north to Cairns or Townsville from our home base in Brisbane, Keith suggested that we only go as far as Yeppoon, basing ourselves at Great Keppel Island for five months. My initial reaction was that I was going to get bored staying in the one place for that long, after all, isn't boating about being on the move finding new places, meeting new people, going on new adventures? But after being at GKI for nearly a month now, we've not been idle, finding plenty of things to keep us busy, without the company of hordes of other boats.

For Sydneysiders Paul and Adele Rayner, who have been boating for the past 10 years on their 10.5 metre catamaran, *Saltpeeter*, GKI epitomises what everyone imagines a tropical island to be. They too are planning to spend an extended period of time around the Keppels in 2019 because, “The sand is good,

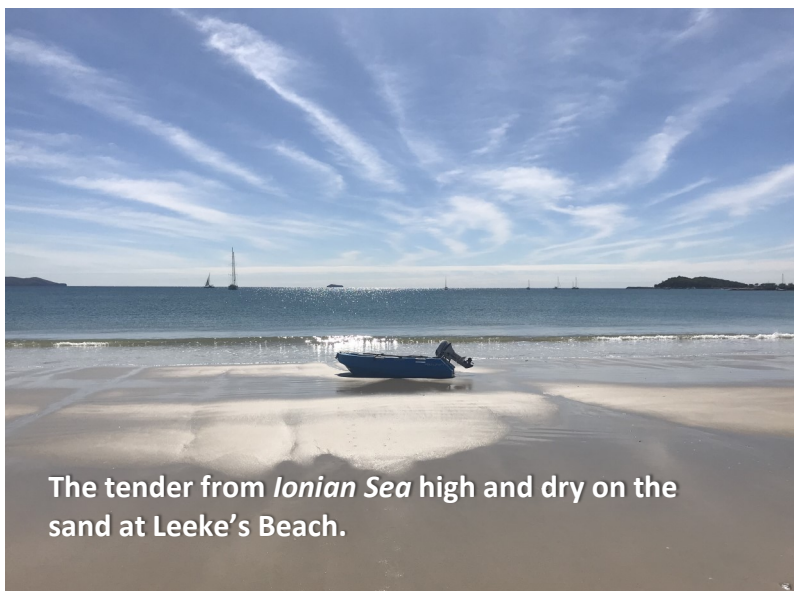


Judith Maizey strikes a pose in the iconic shark's mouth at Fisherman's Beach, in front of the old resort, GKI.

the swimming is good, the fishing is good, and the snorkelling is good”.

The Rayners also think the Keppel Bay Marina at Rosslyn Bay is great and they are really impressed with the fresh fruit and vegetables at the markets in Yeppoon.

“Why leave paradise if you are in paradise,” they responded when asked why they were staying so long. “We like GKI for the clear water and beaches. Anchoring is safe with a



The tender from *Ionian Sea* high and dry on the sand at Leeke's Beach.



Banksia flowers can be seen on the many walks across GKI.

good sandy bottom. It's also a favourite due to the number of walks you can do, the swimming, and fishing."

The Rayners feel the only downside to Great Keppel is the midgies and, "Doing the Keppel Bay shuffle when the wind changes".

My husband, Keith, says, "You can generally find an anchorage in any weather out of the swell unless it's more than 30 knots and then you have to put up with a bit of swell on the northern side. There are far better bad-weather anchorages at Cid Harbour, Macona, and Nara Inlets in the Whitsundays; Double Bay north of Airlie; and at Island Head Creek; but GKI is good for long stays."

In a south easterly, Keith likes Leeke's Beach, as close to the mouth of the creek you can get. He says anywhere at Long Beach is good in northerlies while in a south westerly either Leeke's or Svendsen's are good. "Fisherman's Beach (in front of the old resort) is comfortable in a north easterly, but no good in a south easterly, and Monkey's is a limited

anchorage, but alright in north easterlies," he adds.

Out of cyclone season, GKI does get its fair share of boaties, but generally they are just passing through on their way north or south. Weekends get busy with locals from the Capricorn Coast coming across the paddock from Yeppoon, but generally there are not too many boaties who stay around the Keppels for months on end.

If you do get bored with the scenery around GKI, you are close enough to go north to Island Head Creek or Pearl Bay, or you can head south to Yellow Patch, the Narrows, and Hummocky Island.

But why bother when you are already in paradise.

Don't be too quick to discount the Keppels, particularly Great Keppel Island. With only 18 islands in the Keppel group, it's a microcosm of the Whitsundays, but without the crowds.



ABOVE: Judith Maizey holds her catch of a Small Mouth Nannygai caught at Great Keppel Island.

Judith Maizey: bon vivant, wanderer and writer. Mother, wife and friend. A student of life, always learning. Semi-retired after more than 30 years as a journalist and public relations specialist

Saltwater is my DNA



Christine 'on country'.
(Sherry Zimpel).

Christine Doherty

I begin my story by sharing my heritage, I am a proud Indigenous woman from Queensland, Australia. I am forever a saltwater Aboriginal woman, a descendant of the first peoples of the Keppel Islands, the *Woppaburra* people.

I love writing, I find it healing and therapeutic. Writing allows me to journey to places of the heart, of happy and special memories that I can share with other women from all walks of life, a sense of belonging with other like-minded women writers. It is my dearest hope that my story embraces and inspires passion within other women, an internal flame of connection with the sea, with ancestors who are sea-faring.

I come from a strong line of matriarchal *Woppaburra* (Aboriginal saltwater women) from my great, great, great grandmother, Granny Maggie *Waku*, daughter Granny Judy, daughter Granny *Konomie*, daughter Granny Jessie, daughter and my mother, Susie, with

Mum being our Senior *Konomie/Woppaburra* Elder, loved and adored at 80 years young.

I am humbly and proudly their story-teller, as they did before me, to keep our history and traditional knowledge passed down and living for our future generations. I was given my traditional name (*Darlutta*) by my late great Auntie Ethel Richards, whose traditional name is *Bittabung*, which means, a working name, to strip the bark.

Throughout my story, I use the language words of my ancestors, our first language, in recognition and respect for 2019 being declared by UNESCO as the Year of International Recognition of Indigenous Languages, adding a beautiful flavour of Australia's first people and their first languages.

I carry in my heart and soul, like my ancestors before me, generations of saltwater DNA. My ancestors were a gentle sea-faring



*“My beautiful traditional saltwater country,
our island homelands, kissed by the sun,
and caressed by the moon and stars at
night, is the Keppel Island Group, offshore
islands of the Capricorn Coast of Central
Queensland.”*

Fisherman's Beach, Great Keppel Island (Shelley Wright).

people. For thousands of years, living their traditional lifestyles from the bounty of the sea and surrounding inshore reefs on their stunning island homelands.

I carry in my heart and soul, like my ancestors before me, the eternal love of 'country', the magic and beauty of our island homelands, with swaying palms, azure seas - some days like a sheet of glass, sand so white and clean, with sunrises and sunsets that just melt my heart away. I walk in their footsteps, with love, always gently, respectfully, like my ancestors before me, generational custodians taking care of our precious island homelands and the bounty of our saltwater country.

My beautiful traditional saltwater country, our island homelands, kissed by the sun, and

caressed by the moon and stars at night, is the Keppel Island Group, offshore islands of the Capricorn Coast of Central Queensland. Geographically, the southern-most part of the world heritage listed Great Barrier Reef.

In 1902, the last 16 of my ancestors, mainly women and children, and including my great grandmother *Konomie* (only a young girl) after being enslaved and treated inhumanely on their own country, were forcibly removed from their beloved traditional island homelands. Making way for colonial settlement of the Central Queensland region.

Our ancestors of that 1902 removal, are survived by descendants like me, forever saltwater in our hearts and souls. We continue to honour our ancestors, by keeping

BELOW: NAIDOC celebrations on Woppaburra Country, North Keppel Island (*Konomie*), Queensland, Australia. Great nieces (left to right) Stevie-Jay Jordan, Lilly-Lee Jordan, Ella Jordan, joining their Aunty Chrissy Doherty for the 'Welcome to Country'. (Sherry Zimpel).



their history living, a tapestry of a rich and vibrant culture of the first and original peoples of the Keppel Islands.

If I could express the way I feel in words, the multitude of feelings and emotions I feel each and every time I am on my saltwater Country and when I leave my beloved island homelands, after coming to terms with the removal of my ancestors of long ago, I would use one word, our language word, for paradise, garden of Eden, *Wukaba*.

Many years ago, I was searching for a special word to express my love of my island homelands. I was going through the language transcripts of my *Woppaburrra* great grandmother *Konomie's* interview with Swiss linguist Nils Holmer, where I found the special language word, *Wukaba*, I was so happy (*Wabinga*). It was more than finding the one word, I know I was guided to it, with my deep faith and belief in our spiritual world, where ancestors' spirits guide and point the path.

Wukaba, our paradise, our garden of Eden. One beautiful language word that expresses all of what the heart and soul experiences and feels for all the amazing aspects of our island homelands. Every single thing that I love and cherish about our island homelands, this beautiful language word describes my personal relationship with country, the land, the air, the healing sea, the wind, all living and breathing, the footsteps of our ancestors, the incredible land and marine wildlife, the

stunning flora and fauna overall, the deep connection that is felt deep within the recesses of my soul, to hear our ancestors whispers, to hear the whispers of our island's spirits, that lives within is *Wukaba*.

Our spiritual Dreaming saltwater totem is *MuggaMugga*, the humpback whale. We are a whale Dreaming people and belong to many other Indigenous coastal groups around the Australian coastline that share the whale Dreaming totem. We each have our own language names and dreaming stories. Since the Dreamtime we wait for *MuggaMugga* to make the annual migratory journey, from Antarctic waters north along the Queensland and New South Wales coast, passing through our sea country, to warmer waters all the way to the Great Barrier Reef. The first sighting of *MuggaMugga* is a deeply spiritual time of celebrations and a blessing, all is good in our Sea Country and they are all safe.

In contrast with today's modern sailing boats, I often reflect and compare the ancient watercraft of my ancestors, and their navigation skills and tools. Their ancient water-craft were bark canoes and pandanus swimming logs to travel from island to island. I have many sailing friends who share the love of saltwater and on many occasions share their stories and sailing adventures with me, when they have sailed through my sea country, my island homelands or anchored in one of our beautiful sheltered bays.

***SisterShip* Magazine cruises along with an international flavour. Our contributors hail from every corner of the globe. We encourage writers to maintain their voice and therefore their local spelling.**

Measurements and navigation aids (IALA A and IALA B)* are different too. As valued readers, we just want to keep you on board with our ethos of a less regimented style, and a more international spirit!

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



Dogs Who Sail!

My name is **TANYA RABE** and I look forward to spending time with you within the pages of *SisterShip Magazine* to share the stories, experiences and knowledge of some salty sea dogs.

What is the best type of dog for a boat?

People often ask me, what is the best breed of dog for a boat? I have met over one thousand dogs who sail and of them, there are hundreds of different breeds enjoying life aboard, all over the world, and on different types of boats.

Our boat dogs are Cocker Spaniels, the previous owners had Weimaraners who were twice the size of our Spaniels. I have met Seagles (aka sailing Beagles), Staffys, Malteses, Jack Russells, and to my surprise working dogs; Kelpies, Blue Heelers, and Border Collies who are a long way from home. Let's not forget the designer crew of Labradoodles, Cavoodles and Cockerdoodles. There are also sailing greyhounds, bitzers, and dogs who have escaped death row by mere moments. Some love life on the water



and others are only there out of an undying loyalty to their owner.

I have known someone spend thousands on the perfect 'boat dog' only to discover their new furry crew member loathed being on the boat. So, in my humble opinion, the question is not necessarily *What is the best type of dog for a boat?* but *Who is the best type of person for a dog on a boat?*

I encourage everyone to do their research to discover a breed of dog that will suit your needs. I have included a couple of resources at the end of this article to assist you with your decision making. Many boaties start out with three desires on their boat dog wish list:

- a non-shedding doggy,
- a dog who enjoys the water; and
- one that can get by without a backyard.

At the end of the day, no matter what type of dog you decide on, they all share the same primary need, you.

In my experience with hundreds of furry crew members, regardless of the breed, your dog needs you to be responsible for their safety and wellbeing on the boat and all of the other obvious things like food, exercise,





love, and attention.

When you decide to include your dog in your boating lifestyle whether it be for a couple of hours, a weekend, or long-term cruising, there are four necessary characteristics *you* must have or be willing to develop for your boat dog: acceptance, patience, perseverance, and peace.

One of the first things I advise Dogs Who Sail members is to accept that furry four-legged crew will likely determine your sailing itinerary on many occasions. Some of the most beautiful anchorages are within national and marine parklands. As a responsible dog owner, you really shouldn't let your dog onto these protected lands. We all know there are fines if we do, and I agree, not all of the rules may seem fair, but you will need to accept that's the way that it is at the moment, and seek anchorages and marinas where dogs are allowed.

Patience is truly a virtue when bringing a doggo onboard, especially when you expect your dog to go to the toilet on demand because *you* want her to. There will be times when there is a cold, howling southerly seeping into your bones as you stand on the bow waiting for Bella to stop procrastinating and do her business. Perhaps, like many others, your dog goes beyond procrastination

and downright refuses to go to the toilet on the boat. Remember to exercise patience at this time when you are dinghying to shore so your dog can go to the toilet in comfort on stable ground.

The third attribute I encourage boaties with dogs onboard to master is perseverance with training. If you teach your dog anything, persevere with the Stay and Release commands. Combined with other resources, this training will keep your dog from jumping off the boat when they shouldn't, remaining in the dinghy until you see he is safe to go ashore and, if you are on a sailboat, keep your dog from leaping down into the main saloon from the cockpit. The best type of person for a dog on a boat, is someone who is vigilant about their dog's safety onboard.

Above all, this final characteristic is possibly what will make or break how your dog adapts to sailing life. These wonderful creatures have a great sensitivity to how we respond to what's going on around us. They know when we are happy, their tails wag, and you can see them smiling and wanting to play. They know when we are sad because they soften and come to comfort us. You bet they know when we are angry too. Maxy and Mel would vanish at the hint of a raised voice. Learning to manage your own anxiety and frustrations

onboard, vowing to uphold a peaceful sailing experience for you, your crew, and your dog, will make a world of difference to any breed onboard.

All I ask of every dog owner is to exercise empathy. Your dog doesn't have a voice, so put yourself in their paws and feel what it is they need. There is no perfect breed of dog for a boat. It is your attitude that will make your unique dog the best boat dog you could wish for.

Fair Winds,

Tanya



Tanya 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.

www.dogswhosail.com

Ask to join Tanya's closed Facebook group Dogs Who Sail.

Discover different breeds of dogs through these questionnaires:

Bow Wow Meow have developed a comprehensive list of questions to help match you with a dog that will suit your needs and requirements. They offer a number of recommended breeds based on your answers and back up their suggestions with extensive information on the breed, videos, and where you can connect with one these dogs.

<https://www.selectadogbreed.com/>

Animal Planet offer another well considered questionnaire. It is good but they only offered me one breed of dog. Mind you, it was a very cute dog and appropriate recommendation (Border Terrier). The breed information they offer is well researched and useful for decision making.

<http://www.animalplanet.com/breed-selector/dog-breeds/questionnaire/page1.html?question=1>





Travel Insurance

“What about it”? I hear you say. Well, have you ever considered whether your travel insurance may cover you for boating? What if you have an accident whilst on your boat, “Am I covered”?

Whether holidaying at home or going abroad, many people just rely on free insurance that they get with their bank or simple ‘bucket and spade’ insurance. However, think before you rely on standard travel insurance, especially if you are a boatie, and consider getting a specialist yachting policy. Many standard insurance policies exclude boating, or exclude boating in offshore waters; offshore waters are usually only 12 miles from the shoreline.

Sailing abroad, it is imperative that you make sure you have proper travel insurance, whether taking your own boat or chartering whilst in other countries. It will cover emergency medical costs, repatriation and cancellation. Of course, at home, Medicare is there to help you for medical costs in

the event of an accident in local waters but there are also the benefits of lump sum personal accident cover, cancellation, and repatriation.

So, where do you find boating travel insurance? Well, there are a number of travel insurers who provide a boating policy ‘bolt on’, which could be considered as pretty inadequate. Until recently, no one provided a special yachting policy, until Topsail launched their Yachtsman’s Travel Insurance, covering the Australian yachting community both locally and all over the world.

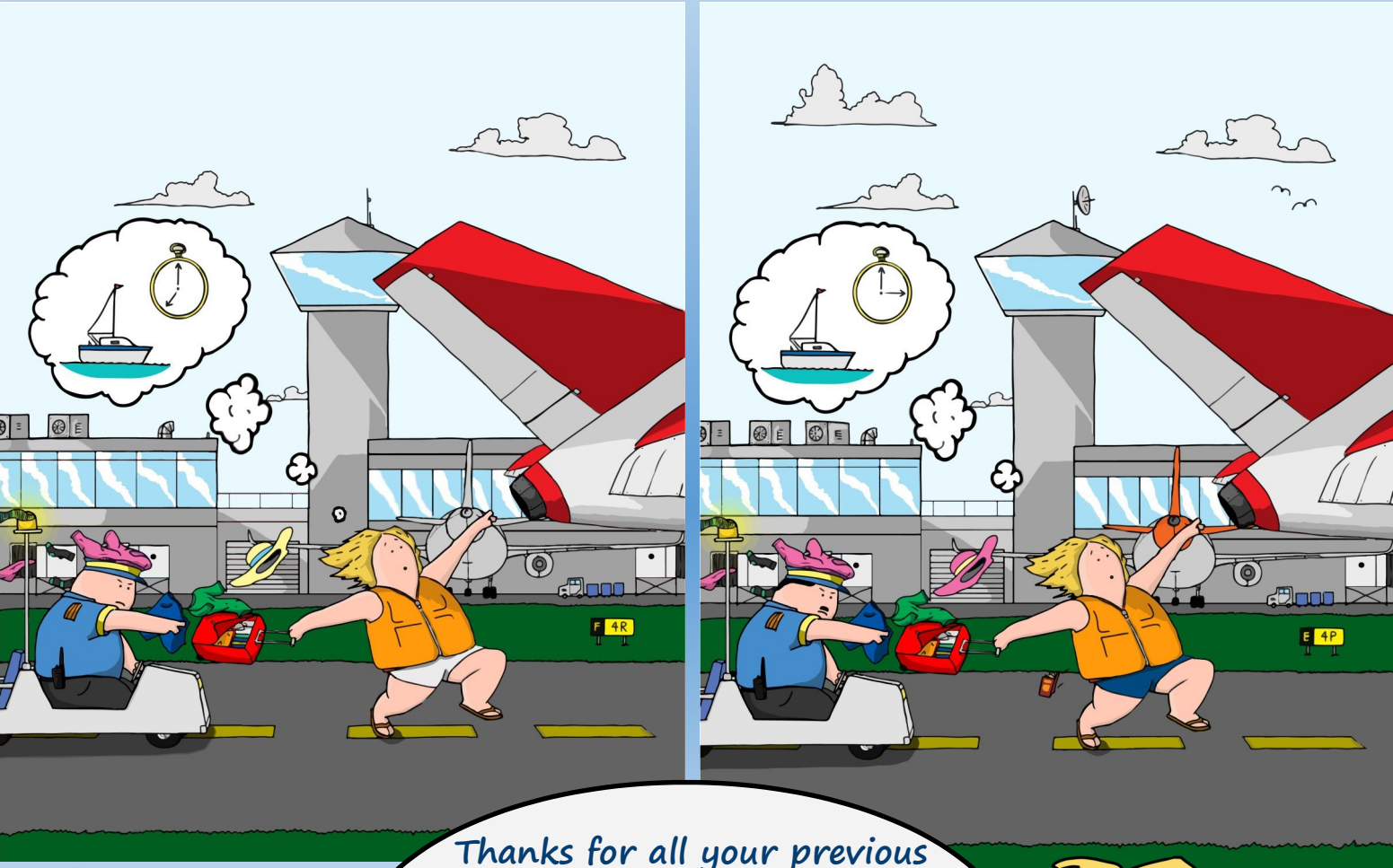
It is well worth considering whether you need travel insurance and doing a bit of homework to determine if your own travel insurance policy is actually covering you when you are out on the boat.

If you have found this helpful and want to find out more, there are other tips and guides on Topsail’s website at our ‘Topsail Top Tips’.



Topsail INSURANCE

Luckily, Topsy knew she hadn't missed the boat when it came to her Yachtsman's Travel Insurance.



Thanks for all your previous entries. Here is a new picture, spot 12 differences and email them to me:
topsy@topsailinsurance.com.au
for another chance to win **\$50**
Have fun!



Yacht



Motorboat



Yachtsman's
Travel

Insurance is our craft

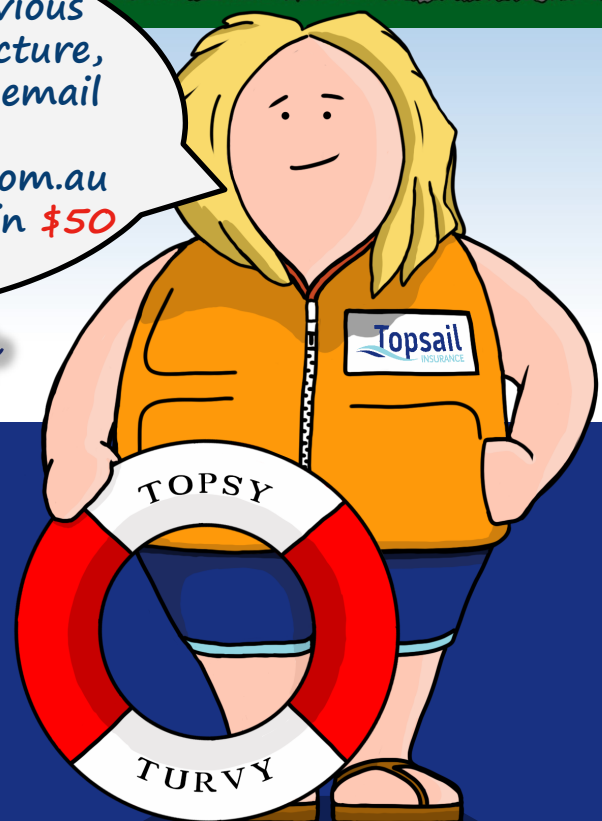
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Sydney +61 (0)2 9188 7828

enquiries@topsailinsurance.com.au

www.topsailinsurance.com.au

AFSL: 467369 ABN: 69 169 907 760



Green on blue

Environment

Lynden Dickson and Octavia Barrington recently took part in the Women Who Sail Australia and Reef Catchment Marine Debris Initiative to remove rubbish from Whites Bay on Middle Percy Island, Great Barrier Reef, Queensland (see *SisterShip* August issue for full story).



Offshore Cruising Preparation Course Emergency Procedures Workshop

FEATURING AUSTRALIAN ADVENTURER, KEYNOTE SPEAKER, AUTHOR
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*Learn skills, gain confidence!
Turn your cruising dreams into cruising reality*

Two day course by the Down Under Rally which includes
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All the subjects below will be covered plus much more



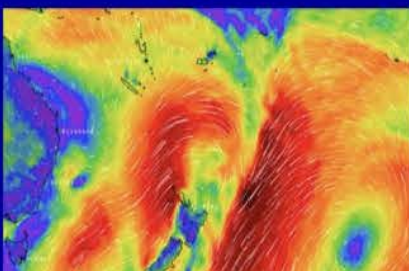
Safety Gear



Offshore Communications



Emergency Procedures



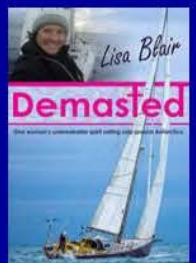
Weather Forecasting



Preparing your vessel for offshore cruising- Catamarans & Monohulls

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www.downunderrally.com/events



SHERO

Celebrating achievements big and small!

Sarah P. Gibson

I've finally left my mooring and it's because of a book. I fell away from writing my sailing blog not because of time or disinterest but because I stopped believing in myself. I saw no way forward to the place where I want to be; sailing and cruising and a life on the water. Feeling this way, it was too upsetting to read my normal sailing books and instead I wandered around the library feeling lost. I was definitely washed up on a ledge and feeling pounded to pieces.

I drifted into summer. The boat swung on the mooring, every day sunny with a perfect breeze. I would row out, clean, polish, and lie on the settee, feeling sad. Why didn't I go sailing? Because I can't take the boat out myself! What if something happened? It would not be 'prudent' to take this risk. I needed to wait for the return of my always-away merchant marine husband who was also making noises about buying a tractor and becoming a 'dirt dweller'.

Then, in that mysteriously serendipitous internet way, a magazine called *SisterShip* appeared in one of my searches. Intrigued by the name, I bought an online copy and began reading about women sailors of all types. I flipped a page and there appeared the cover of the book: *Facing Fear Head On*. And knew, exactly in that moment, the answer to my problem. I was afraid to take the boat out alone.



Well, duh. But it had been hidden from me because I wasn't a new sailor who would expect to be afraid. Get this; I grew up sailing, worked on a windjammer, have sailed up to Canada, down to Florida, and back. We have owned our 34-foot catamaran for seven years and I am the captain (my husband is the Engineer). I know, I know... how could I possibly be afraid? But I was.

I ordered the book. I rowed out to the boat, lay on the settee, and read every story in it. And thought of the quote from *Chicken Run*, one of my all-time favorite movies, "Fowler, you have to fly the plane. You're always talking about back in your day, well, TODAY is your day!"

I decided I could do it;

I decided I would do it;

Take the boat out alone...

TRIP 1: SAILING ALONE AROUND THE ISLAND

The chosen day arrived warm, sunny and with a perfect breeze. Rats, no excuse to *not* go sailing. I rowed out to the boat and the engine started right away. She was raring to go; I was less so. Just in case you are thinking what a sniveling coward, I will explain some of the challenges of sailing in my location: a roiling river current, boats moored all around me, a nine-foot tide, a bay full of unmarked ledges, and gobs of brightly-colored lobster pots EVERYWHERE.

I decided leaving the mooring under sail would be suicidal. But leaving using the engine was still daunting because, did I forget to mention I also had no reverse? Our cat has a driveleg, usually a great asset as it raises up out of the water when sailing, but last year we hit a log. So, now it works but only in forward gear (until the parts arrive from the UK).

I dropped the mooring line before that little voice saying, 'don't do this, you idiot' got any louder. I scrambled back to the cockpit, grabbed the wheel, squeezed between the boat behind me and the shallow spot, carefully avoided the stern of the expensive Hinckley, and swung out into the river current.

As the current swept us slowly out to sea, my heart stopped pounding. OMG, I was sailing!

Well, almost... When the current slowed as we entered the bay, I rolled out the genoa jib. Once it filled I turned off the engine and cranked up the driveleg.

Ahhh... silence except for wind and water. Now I was sailing... *alone*.

The End.

Oh, come on, this is sailing. You and I know the s*** was going to hit the fan at some point. I did, however, have a glorious two hours sailing around the large island near my mooring. Then I tacked around the northern tip right into a lobster boat hauling traps (they have the right of way), and a Sunfish zipping everywhere as I turned.

No problem; I started the engine, dropped the driveleg, and started to roll the sail in. Which, of course, stuck halfway while the wind piped up and I caught a buoy on my port rudder. The Sunfish folks and lobsterman were now staring at the catamaran spinning in a circle with the sail flapping and an idiot at the helm. Sigh...

'*Stay Calm,*' I repeated over and over as I ran



Wing on wing and toes.



and that I hadn't hit a ledge, gone aground, or wrapped a line in the prop. Yes, crap happened but I hadn't panicked. Wow!

I can do this;

I will do this;

Sail our boat alone.

to the stern and pulled up the rudder to pop off the buoy. I tightened the jib sheet and sailed with half a sail downwind, out of the way of the lobsterman and the annoying Sunfish. Then I pulled the jib out and rolled it in slowly. I pattered up the channel, gave the middle finger to the Sunfish (nah, just kidding), turned into the wind at my mooring, grabbed my line, and cleated it off.

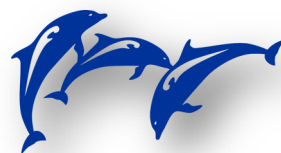
I collapsed on the deck, stunned it was over



Sarah P. Gibson is a sailing librarian who writes *Water Traveler*, a blog about sailing stories, with a new side page about the now up to six solo sailing trips she has taken, each a bit further out to sea.

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www.sarahpgibson.com



Do you have an achievement (big or small) you are proud of?

We'd love to hear it!

Email editor@sistershipmagazine.com



BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS WITH THE DOWN UNDER RALLY

Whether you are westbound on a circumnavigation and considering your options for cyclone season or you are already in Australia and looking to make your first offshore voyage, the **Down Under 'Go West' or 'Go East' Rally** can assist.

2017 Go East Participants 'Gadji' - New Caledonia

Image Credit: Luke Ludemann - DIY Sailing

GO EAST

CRUISERS RALLY
AUSTRALIA TO NEW CALEDONIA

If the adventure of sailing to and cruising in new countries appeals to you but you would prefer to make the voyage in the company of likeminded people then the **Go East Rally** can help turn your cruising dreams into reality.

Each year the **Go East Rally** departs Queensland for the 780nm voyage to New Caledonia.

The **Down Under Rally** believes that New Caledonia is the best-kept secret in the Pacific.

Cruising in New Caledonia offers the opportunity to sail and explore literally hundreds of miles of sheltered waterways inside the largest barrier reef fringed lagoon in the world. The lagoon is truly a sailor's paradise and offers those who cruise there clear blue water, pristine coral reefs and literally hundred's of uninhabited island and atolls and just as many uncrowded anchorages.

The **Down Under Go East Rally** can help you prepare for the voyage, make the voyage and enjoy the destination.



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

GO WEST

CRUISERS RALLY TO AUSTRALIA

To sail halfway around the world and not visit & spend time cruising in Australia is simply a travesty, yet year after year many international cruising yachts choose to do just that! Why?

In years gone by, Australia earned the reputation of not being 'cruiser friendly' and this came about as a result of a few poor experiences that were caused by a lack of readily available information about what to expect and how to prepare for arriving in the country by yacht.

The **Down Under Rally** has remedied this situation and in the past 3 years more than 100 international yachts have joined the rally and entered Australia without a problem. They have then gone on to tick off many bucket list items, such as sailing under the Sydney Harbour Bridge and being on their own boat and witnessing the spectacle of the world famous Sydney New Years Eve Fireworks.

The vast majority of the East Coast of mainland Australia and the spectacular coastline of Tasmania offers the visiting cruising yacht the opportunity to sail by day and anchor at night, as well as experience some of the most diverse and spectacular locations you will ever find, in a relaxed and convenient manner.

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Buying and Selling Boats Made Easy

Yacht Broker SONIA ROBINSON shares

EziYacht Series – Part 3: The Customer Journey:

Getting it right when buying a *used* boat without going over budget or stressing out



Are you an impulsive buyer or are you the conservative type? Perhaps you're more of an emotional buyer—or a combination of factors influence you when making a purchase.

If you're cautious or calculated you could procrastinate too long and end up missing out on a great boat. On the contrary, if you have *fomo** tendencies and are inclined to jump straight in without a second thought you may end up out of pocket—and possibly without a boat or with the boat back on the market before too long as it was 'unsuitable' for your needs.

Whatever the case may be, buying a boat is a big decision and should not be taken too lightly. There are certain steps that should be considered before you part with your hard earned cash and take over the helm.

In this episode of 'Buying and Selling Boats Made Easy' we'll examine 'The Customer Journey' and provide some useful tips and advice to ensure you buy with confidence when the time is right for you. We'll

look at how to make use of your time on board during inspections and provide a list of questions to ask (yourself) before signing on the dotted line so that the experience is exciting and fun instead of stressful and filled with anxiety.

EziYacht Tip 1

Ask yourself 'WHY' you want to buy a boat in the first place.

Many people end up selling their boat within two years of buying—some, within six months of buying. Of course, there are plenty of justified reasons however, a lot of the time it is because they didn't think it through properly. Consider asking yourself if this boat is really the right step for you just now and put some thought into what it might be like when you own it.

- What is your intended usage and frequency?
- What type of sailing will you be doing most of the time?

- Will you have crew—and if not, will you manage her single-handed or might you need to do some training first?
- How soon do you want to own a boat and if you are also selling a boat does this need to happen before you buy?
- Where will you keep this boat and how accessible will it be?
- Can you afford to buy a yacht right now?

If after answering these questions you still feel ready, then it's time to think about what your future boat will look like.

EziYacht Tip 2

Make a list to narrow your search criteria.

It's always a good idea to do your homework first, make some plans for taking ownership and then do your due diligence by checking the boat out thoroughly before making an offer.

Similar to buying a property there should be certain things you do want in a boat and some you don't. *Before* you start traipsing around to look at boats have the conversation with yourself/your partner(s) and jot down a few things on paper or your iPad.

It's important to ask yourself what you will *use* this boat for most of the time as this will help to narrow down what you are looking for. For example, if you're a novice sailor, there's no point in looking for a pedigree race boat, even if it looks gorgeous, as it will be too much for you. Similarly, if you're raising a family, then safety features and comfort should be top priority.

First off, consider 'boat type'. This includes size, rig and material configuration, and

possibly interior layout as these are the things that you can't easily change once you settle on a boat. For my most recent yacht purchase the first thing I decided on was that it would need to be fibreglass. My preference was for a centre cockpit for protection offshore, although it wasn't a deal breaker, so this helped to rule out other boat options and lessened the confusion.

Then consider the 'aesthetics' and divide your list into categories to include 'must haves', 'nice to haves', and possibly even some 'deal breakers'.

For example, you may not like teak decks and you may not want in-mast furling but you might be flexible on the number of cabins or heads. The upholstery colour may churn your stomach at first sight but this is easily changed, as is out dated navigation or electronic equipment – provided you have the budget.

EziYacht Tip 3

Define your budget and stick to it.

Unless you're expecting a windfall in the near future or your winning lotto numbers have just come in, set an amount and allow for a buffer (approx 10-15%) over and above the offer price. If you end up over-spending on the purchase, you may be in for a stressful time worrying about how to pay for services or repairs that crop up down the track. Don't fool yourself into thinking that the boat is completely 'ready to sail away' as there will *always* be ongoing costs. BOAT = Bring On Another Thousand!

Note: if you're reading this in horror, then you should ask yourself if you are really ready to buy a boat.

EziYacht Tip 4

Find out as much as possible about the yacht before you step foot on board.

Blogs or discussion threads can be somewhat inaccurate but official yacht reviews or owners' forums can be helpful.

My advice is that if you're going to seek advice from someone other than your Broker or the owner, this should come from those who possess first-hand knowledge of the yacht type you are interested in.

Be sure that your sources are reliable and you may even learn more to influence your decision to buy. Don't take everything you're told as gospel as there are far too many opinionated morons online making claims about things they know nothing about.

THE INSPECTION

So you've decided to devote a weekend to viewing yachts and when you speak to the Broker, they have more options for you than you imagined. Great! Maybe. It is definitely a good idea to look at a few to solidify in your mind that you are definitely on the right track with your checklist—however, if you try to pack in too many viewings in one day or one weekend you will end up confused and exhausted.

The best method is to really focus on what fits into your search criteria (your checklist)... and then allow yourself to have one 'wild card' choice – for the dreamers among us. Here are a few pointers for inspection day:

- Be selective of the boats you view and try to space them out;
- Don't be late and don't waste your, the owner's, or the Broker's time by looking at unsuitable boats that don't match your search criteria;

- Bring a notebook or make some mental notes – it's impossible to remember everything and you might get carried away in the moment and overlook something crucial;
- Take photos as this will help later to recall how you felt when on board;
- Ask about the price - don't be afraid to ask if there have been any offers or if there is currently any other interest in the yacht – but only do this if you are genuinely interested in making an offer;
- If you're an impulsive buyer, allow yourself the time to absorb what you've seen. Refer back to your checklist before you commit and ask yourself 'Is this boat right for me/us?' If it is and you have the finances then Go For It.

EziYacht Tip 5

Back up your decision to buy by placing a realistic offer that will be taken seriously.

THE OFFER

If you've got this far and followed some of the advice shared here, you should have a fairly good idea of what the boat is worth as opposed to the 'perceived value'. If there is a huge discrepancy between this and the asking price then it's likely that either you or the seller is dreaming, or that you've missed something. (There are other variables that add to a yacht's value such as popularity, re-sale value and 'current demand').

In some rather unfortunate cases there may already be an undisclosed verbal offer on the table from a third party. This happened to me with my last yacht purchase (typical!) and it can definitely upset the apple cart. As a Broker, this can be awkward as someone is going to walk away disappointed.

You may opt to increase your offer, and this may help to secure the purchase. Just remember to stay within your budget. I really wanted the boat although I did end up a little short for repairs... hence passing on this lesson! At the end of the day, it's your call.

Once a purchase price has been agreed by both parties, you will be expected to pay a deposit (usually 10%) immediately. There should also be some paperwork outlining the terms of the agreement.

THE PURCHASE

For most, buying a boat is a very exciting time with lots of mixed emotions. Once you've paid a deposit things start to feel more *real*. We've all heard of 'Buyers Remorse' so to avoid waking up in cold sweat with feelings of doubt, it's a good opportunity to address any concerns head on should they arise.

EziYacht Tip 6

Listen to your gut, as well as to your head or your heart.

If you are going through a Broker, you have the perfect opportunity to raise all questions and concerns without imposition. If your Broker doesn't have all the answers right away, give them time while remembering that they are your voice and ears and are there to facilitate a smooth transaction for both parties. It is also in our (the Broker) best interest to ensure that both parties are happy and looked after during this part of the sale and purchase negotiations.

A reputable surveyor/shipwright/engineer will also help to cast away any niggling feelings you may have and prepare you more for making the final decision on whether the boat is right for you. Of course, this comes with a price tag but it's a fraction of what you could be up for if you're prone to taking



risks or willing to save a buck or two... it may even work out more in your favour if a re-negotiation is required following any subsequent inspection.

There's no doubt it will be a bit of a rollercoaster ride but doing your due diligence will pay off in the long run and you'll enjoy your boat for years to come happy knowing what you are getting into.

EziYacht Tip 7

Be prepared to find 'The Boat' at any time and only proceed if you are ready and available to see it through.

There's no point looking at yachts if you're about to head overseas or not available in coming weeks to attend survey, test sail, and handover.

In most cases you will need to set aside three to four weeks following the offer to complete the purchase and acquisition of your new yacht. If you're buying privately you will not have the support of a Broker to follow up on quotes, repairs, and they won't be present for surveys or test sail and there may be no guided handover. So make sure both you and the seller(s) are available throughout the sale so that it can progress quickly and smoothly without causing inconvenience to anyone involved.

THE HANDOVER

The handover is the most exciting day of all as you get to take your new yacht home – wherever that may be (and hopefully you’ve thought about that already). It’s usually the last day to gain some useful titbits of advice or ‘driving instructions’ from the Broker or owner regarding the systems on board. It’s a good idea to have your phone or iPad available to record or have a notepad and pen handy to take notes.

A few things to remember BEFORE you take ownership:

- Arrange a rapid transfer with your bank – don’t leave the seller waiting;
- Secure vessel insurance;
- Reserve a mooring or berthing location;
- Make arrangements to transfer the vessel’s registration;
- Book delivery crew (if required);
- Check safety equipment before your first offshore passage; and
- Transfer Epirb registration into your name with AMSA.



After this, it’s over to you to enjoy the pleasures of being the Captain of your own Ship – aye aye.

*FOMO Fear Of Missing Out.

“It isn’t that life ashore is distasteful to me.

But life at sea is better.”

Sir Francis Drake

Don’t miss Part 4 of EZIYACHT’s ‘Buying and Selling Boats Made Easy’ in the next Sistership edition where we’ll take a look at the Pros and Cons of using a Broker and how to choose the best one for you and your boat.

More in the EZIYACHT series ‘Buying and Selling Boats Made Easy’:

Part 1 – Tips on how to sell privately and preparing your yacht for market

Sistership June 2019

Part 2 - Selling your boat the smart way and dealing with prospective buyers

Sistership August 2019



SONIA ROBINSON grew up sailing the Irish coastal waters and became comfortable at sea from a young age encouraged by her mother, a passionate sailor. From humble beginnings as a sailing instructor in the Mediterranean, she found her dream job racing classic yachts only to discover a life of adventure which took her across the Atlantic working aboard numerous ocean going yachts. She’s a qualified RYA Offshore Yachtmaster and Australian Sailing Senior Keelboat Instructor and has devoted a large part of her career in the development of sailing with Australian Sailing, RYA, YNZ and Fiji Yachting Association.

Having owned boats throughout her life, Sonia realised through her own experience that a good Broker is a rare find. She decided to set the world straight by turning to yacht broking in 2017. Sonia believes in excellent customer service combined with quality marketing and an honest approach and attitude to selling. Sonia’s goal for EziYacht is to become the number one cruising and classic Yacht Brokerage in Australia.

Sonia is happiest when sharing her passion for boating by helping to make it accessible and safe for everyone and she would love nothing more than to encourage more women to take the step towards boat ownership.

***My profession is selling yachts and you can call me at any time for a free consultation on 0410 35 77 55 or shoot me an email on sonia@eziyacht.com.**

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Division 2 start (left to right) *Sequin*, *Abracadabra*, *Freaky*, and *On Appro*.

Brilliant sailing marks New Zealand's Mud House Wines Women's Keelboat Regatta

Over a hundred sailors delivered some stunning performances on the water over the weekend during the third Mud House Women's Regatta hosted by the Waikawa Boating Club. Racing in a wide range of conditions the best women sailors in the New Zealand clashed in the four race event. A best-ever turnout of seventeen boats saw crews from all parts of the country put their skills to the test.

With over sixty percent of the sailors visiting from other parts of the country the social program was also an important facet of the weekend. Sailors were treated to a wine tasting, with regatta sponsors Mud House Wines hosting the crews at a superb venue in scenic Kumutoto Bay.

Racing got underway late on Saturday due to a lack of wind however the programmed two races were completed before crews returned to shore. The regatta dinner on Saturday evening featured an interview with top New Zealand sailor Jo Aleh MNZM. Winner of

multiple World Championships and Olympic medals (Gold in London and Silver in Rio), Jo spoke of the challenges facing aspiring young athletes in their quest to be the best.

Sunday dawned much drier than Saturday with extremely light winds testing the capabilities of crews in these conditions. As the breeze filled in later in the day Race Officer Viv Butcher was able to set a tight and testing windward-leeward course as the final act of the regatta. With crew ranging from relative racing novices to current and former national champions, the racing featured high spots for many.

Close racing in Division 2 saw a fine double from Lyttleton skipper Karen Selway with her Young 88 *Abracadabra*. Selway sailed a near perfect regatta, taking line honours in all four races as well as winning three of the four races on handicap. The Division 2 podium was rounded out by Waikawa boat *Freaky*, the Farr 727 helmed by experienced ocean sailor Jill Bethell with Waikawa's Nicky

Jenkins sailing the Hanse 385 *On Appro* taking third place.

Division 1 delivered some fine racing from many of the best women in the country. Regatta guest Jo Aleh took to the water aboard *Satellite Spy* helmed by Carla Bennet and contributed to a perfect four from four for line honours to the Ross 40. Current national women's keelboat champion Sally Garrett brought her crack crew from Auckland and, despite stepping aboard less than 24 hours before the regatta began, Garrett and her crew sailed an immaculate regatta, winning four races from four on handicap aboard the David and Jo Grigg owned Beneteau 36.7 *Global*. Showing exceptional ability to multi-task, regatta coordinator Juliet Abbott helmed the Young Rocket *Oldsmobile* to second place in the regatta, the racing so close that the final result was decided on countback with *Satellite Spy* taking third, one point clear of New Year

regatta champion *Kaimai Flyer*.

With dates for the 2020 event set and visiting crews already committing to the event, the regatta looks to have a strong future. Regatta spokesperson Duncan Mackenzie said, "The event is rapidly becoming a 'must do' on the calendar of top women sailors nationwide. We're looking forward to growing the event alongside our foundation sponsors Mud House Wines".

Full results here:

<https://waikawaboatingclub.co.nz/mud-house-womens-regatta-results/>

For further information:

Duncan Mackenzie (Club Development Officer)

Waikawa Boating Club

events@waikawaboatingclub.co.nz

Photo credit: Karmyn Ingram.



Division 1 start (left to right) *Kaimai Flyer*, *Global*, *High Voltage*, *Khamsin*, *Satellite Spy*, and *Oldsmobile*.



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Barefoot Boating Blunderment (BBB)



Jane Chevous

Jane and her husband Ivan try to follow the BBB principles on the sailing boat *Chantey*.

- 1. Go with open arms;***
- 2. Walk barefoot and tread lightly on this earth;***
- 3. Blundering or random wandering in the flow; and***
- 4. Take only friendship, leave only delight.***

As I write this, the devastation in the Bahamas from Hurricane Dorian still lies heavy on the hearts of all sailors. Having sustained some damage from (only Cat 1) Hurricane Newton in 2016, we feel a strong empathy with everyone who has lost loved ones, homes, their community. With the level of destruction so high that there hasn't yet been time to count the dead, and with many needing refuge, our thoughts and prayers are with everyone affected. I'm sure we are all asking, how can we help? The Seven Seas Cruising Association is a good place to start for timely and informative communication in such situations. Their Facebook group has information from local contacts about

bringing supplies by boat, and the clear message from islanders is, please still visit and charter here, tourism is needed more than ever to support the rebuilding efforts.

Despite our transient lifestyle, liveaboard cruisers can develop a very strong sense of community, with a camaraderie and sharing often compared to family, or as I like to call



it, our tribe. Research by Caroline Lusby and Stephen Anderson in 2011 found the Bahamas be a special place for the cruising community, more developed than most and with a strong outreach into the local community. It is this role of contributing to the places we visit that is behind the fourth principle of BBB, leave only delight.

I'm writing this from England, as we are visiting friends and family while *Chantey* nests in a Panamanian mangrove mooring for the hurricane season. Precious days have been spent with our grandchildren and their parents, memories that will sustain us when we are back cruising several thousand miles away. This weekend we joined the land-based fun at our local sailing club regatta, sailing model boats down the little stream that borders the village green, cheering the contestants in the firkin race. I even managed to be in the winning team in the adult tug-of-war! Sharing supper and a pint with friends in the clubhouse afterwards, catching up on

local news, we felt that warm and grounding acceptance of being part of a community that know you well. Nowadays we always say that the boat is our home, the cruising community our tribe, but is it the same?

The camaraderie of the cruising community has certainly sustained us through some tough times, as well as celebrating the joys of life with us. There is the practical support of help with repairs, and the wisdom of the hive mind, with social media available at a click of a button even at some remote anchorage. It's great being with others who don't ask you what on earth you do all day, who understand why it's hard to say exactly where you'll be in six months. A community based on shared experience can be just as strong as a community of place. Our identity is shaped by what we do, as well as where we are from.

However, spending time with family and our sailing club peers has underlined for us that while scattered communities do work, for us



Hurricane damage at Guaymas marina.

they're just not the same as gathered ones. We yearn to be with our loved ones for some of the milestones of each year, whether good or bad times, not just to support from afar. And we miss being part of a community we know well enough to contribute, to help sustain life and bring joy and well-being to others.

There's a danger when we travel to distant shores with very different lifestyles to our own, we make assumptions about what people want or need. We bring t-shirts and pencils when actually they need money to build a concrete cistern; we offer to trade tinned food for fish from the canoe that stops by, they ask for petrol for the outboard, or drinking water.

It's only when we stay in a place long enough to start to get to know people that we really understand what our role might be and appreciate what the community can offer us. We met some great people in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua, but our impressions were only fleeting and in danger of becoming stereotyped memories. Whereas



Island birthday party.

the months we spent in Mexico and El Salvador were long enough to develop relationships of mutual understanding and appreciation. We were invited into homes and made lasting friendships. We learnt about each other's struggles, vulnerabilities, hopes, and dreams. We recognised not just our common humanity, but also our equality and unique gifts. We moved beyond stereotypes and generalisations. Not all white people are rich and patronising and not all Latino men are macho and misogynist!

Margaret Mead defined community as "a group of people who share a common concern and are doing something about it". By that definition, swapping storm tactics at anchor and buying rice from the local tienda doesn't really make us a community. Sharing practical ideas on the Cruisers who Care about Climate Facebook group is a good start. Joining the local beach litter pick, wrapping presents for the local Christmas party, volunteering to teach English or dinghy sailing for a few weeks doesn't just



Mango canoe delivery.

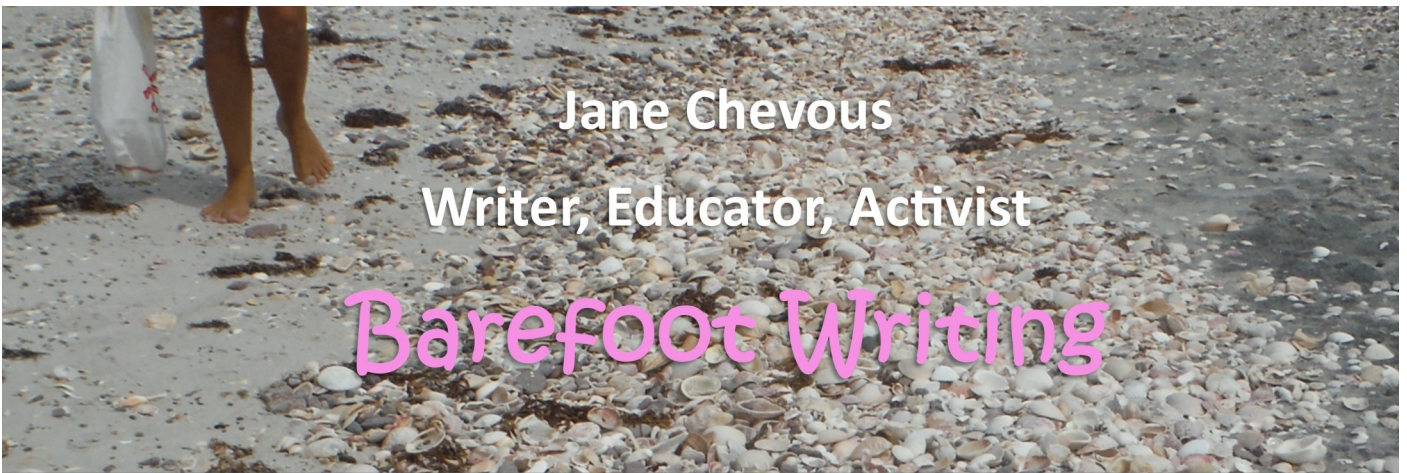
earn you membership of a new community, it brings you the priceless gifts of esteem, purpose and value. And that's the thing. This isn't about being holier-than-thou, in fact you could say that generosity is selfish. As St Francis said, it is in giving that we receive.

So, I really recommend slow boating. Find a community you can hang around in for a while, ask how you can get involved. You won't regret it! And please let us know how you get on.



ABOVE: Friend's house for dinner.

RIGHT: Christmas party at La Cruz, Mexico.



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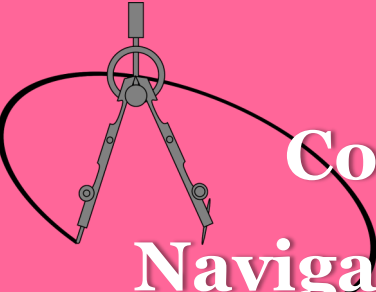
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Coastal Navigation with Jackie Parry



OCTOBER ISSUE CHALLENGE: CAN YOU ANSWER THIS QUESTION?

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can it help us in determining our
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Please don't do that!



Shelly Galligan busts medical myths and offers advice for medical emergencies on the water.

When I was working in the ER, I was always joshing that I wanted to have a bright red “hot phone” installed in the department for anyone thinking of doing something that they weren’t quite sure was their best idea. You call me and I’ll tell you what I think. Fairly often I’d have had to say “Please don’t do that!”



In offshore medicine circles, I am asked questions that bring back thoughts of my old “hot phone” idea. This is where my beloved red phone meets paper. We’re going to bust medical myths, kick a few Old Wives’ Tales to the curb, grab Urban Legend by the ears and maybe learn a thing or two about handling medical emergencies on the water.

There are more than a few bits of misinformation out there about treating burns. Maybe you’ve heard that you should pop the blisters that form, or slather a burn in butter? Please don’t do that!

Burns can be caused by exposure to heat, electricity, chemicals, inhalation, or friction. They’re classified by how deeply the burn penetrates the skin. First-degree or superficial burns don’t penetrate the skin. The small blood vessels and nerves are intact. These burns cause redness, pain, and warmth. Think simple sunburn. Second-degree or partial thickness burns go a little deeper and damage small surface vessels and nerves. They cause redness, pain, and warmth just like the first-degree burn, but also cause blisters. Examples of a second-degree burn

would be a blistered sunburn or rope burn. The worst type of burn, the one that makes even battle-hardened ER nurses quake a little in their boots is the third degree or full thickness burn. This burn penetrates down into the deeper layers of the skin, called the dermis, where it destroys blood vessels and nerves. Third degree burns may appear gray or black, have no blisters and may not even be painful due to the destruction of nerves. This type of burn might come from a galley fire or engine fire.

In the ER, we look at the big nasties first. Offshore is the same. Is this burn really bad? On the water, when deciding how deeply you’re standing in alligators, consider three things:

- ♦ the degree of the burn;
- ♦ the location on the body; and
- ♦ how much of the body has been burned.

Begin the process of evacuating your patient off the boat, ideally to an ER or Burn Center, when you see any of these things:

- ♦ Partial thickness burns of hands, feet, face, genitals, or over joints. These cause problems as they swell, potentially compromising circulation; later, as they scar, compromising movement.

- ◆ Circumferential burns. When a burn goes completely around a part of an arm or leg, the swelling can cut off circulation.
 - ◆ Burns greater than 10% body surface area. We lose a lot of fluid from burns, so a larger burn can cause fluid loss shock. A quick guide to determine the percentage is to use the patient's palm size to estimate the burn size. The palm is about 1% of the body's surface area.
 - ◆ Full thickness, electrical, and chemical burns require advanced treatment. Full thickness burns are at increased risk of infection. Electrical burns can cause damage to the body's internal organs and tissues that can't be seen with your eye. Chemicals are difficult to remove from the skin and can go on to burn for hours after exposure. Most chemical burns need to be rinsed with clean water for at least 30 minutes.
 - ◆ Singed nasal hair, burned lips, a cough, or sooty phlegm. These signs indicate that the airway may have been burned. Swelling of the airway or fluid collecting in the lungs from a burn can be life threatening.
 - ◆ Very young or very old patients. These two groups can get worse really quickly with zero notice.
- These are MAJOR burns with an increased risk of infection, fluid loss, respiratory problems, and circulation issues, and should be taken very seriously with the patient evacuated from the boat as quickly and safely as possible. In the meantime, if it's safe for you to approach the person, make sure they keep breathing. Begin CPR if needed; watch for signs of shock like fainting, pale skin, and shallow breathing; protect them from further injury; remove any rings, jewelry or other restrictive items from the burned area; and cover the burn loosely with a clean cloth or cool moist dressing. If appropriate, provide food and fluids while you seek or await help.



Photo credit: Devin Carter.

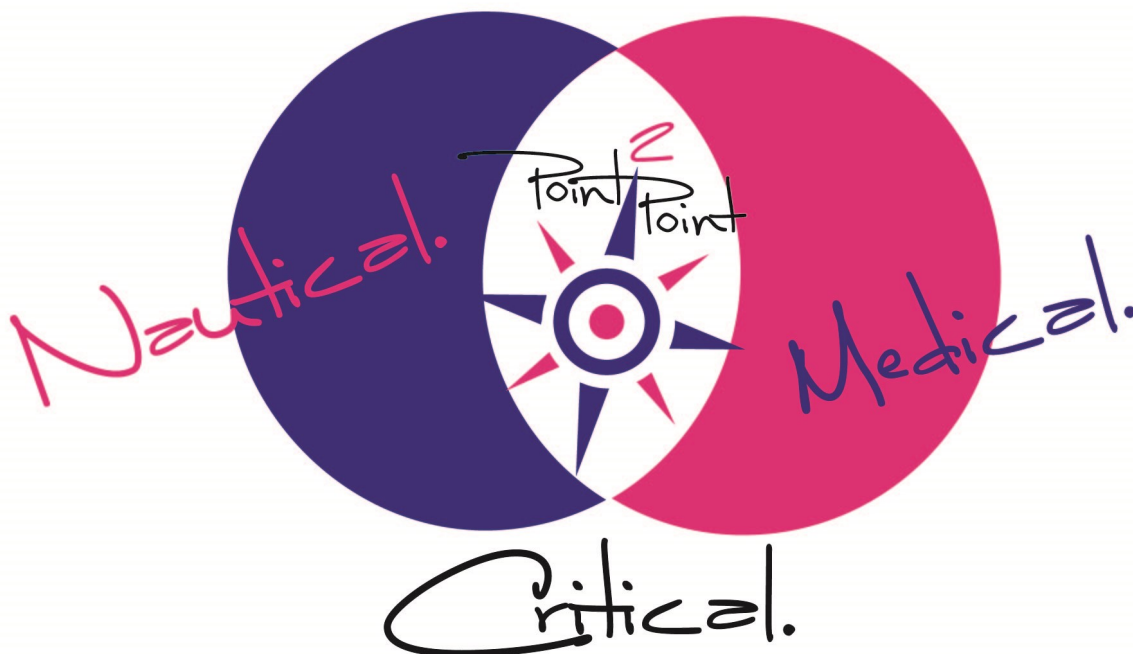
For minor burns that we can treat on the boat, start with cooling the burn by running it under cool (not cold) water. If no running water is available, use a bucket of cool water or a cool, moist compress. Please don't immerse large burns greater than 10% of the body's surface area in cold water, however. This might cause the body temperature to drop.

Be very careful removing any clothing from the burn as it may be stuck. Pulling clothing away quickly may pull a person's skin off with it. No one wants that! If clothing is stuck to the burn, pour the cool water right over the clothes. Remove any rings or jewelry from the area quickly and gently before swelling occurs. Removing jewelry from the area of any injury is good practice. This keeps us from having to cut off your favorite ring later.

Leave blisters intact please. I know it's hard. I'm a popper too, but the fluid inside of a

blister aids in healing and the roof of the blister acts as a natural bandage to prevent infection. Blisters should be decompressed only if absolutely necessary. Any loose dead skin can be trimmed away with a clean scissors if necessary. The fancy medical word for this is debridement.

Once the burning process has been stopped and the burn cooled, treat it like an abrasion. Gently wash any dirt or debris from the burn using clean water and mild soap and pat the area dry with a clean cloth. Apply a thin layer of aloe or antibiotic ointment. (For more info on aloe please link to the aloe pro tip on my website here: <https://shellygalligan.com/tip-trick-pearl/aloe-vera/>) Opt for the real deal, 100% pure aloe vera gel. Avoid the creepy green stuff from the sunburn isle. Aloe has many amazing properties including anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, moisturizing, and pain-reducing magic. It promotes the healing of minor burns, abrasions, and skin irritations. Butter should never be used on a



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burn. It traps heat and increases the risk of infection. Butter is for toast, not burns!

Cover the burn with a non-stick or specialized burn dressing to prevent contamination and infection. Large areas of burn can be difficult to dress, for example a sunburned back and shoulders. Be creative. An improvised dressing in this case could be a clean t-shirt. Change the dressing daily. This is also a good time to check the burn for any signs of infection such as increased redness, swelling, pain, or pus coming from the wound. If evidence of infection is noted, follow up with a medical provider immediately as antibiotics may be necessary.

Burns can be incredibly painful. Over the counter pain medications are helpful if your patient is able to take them, especially the anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen. They treat the pain directly and also treat the source of the pain which is the inflammation. Over the counter topical anesthetics, such as Burn Jel can be helpful as well. These contain a medication called viscous lidocaine which numbs the surface of the skin. It can be used in small amounts, no more than two ounces every four hours. For a large area, like the sunburned back example, mix the Burn Jel with aloe so it will cover more territory. It's also important to verify that your patient's tetanus immunization is up to date. (Please link here to another pro tip on my website with more info on tetanus shots: <https://shellygalligan.com/tip-trick-pearl/tetanus-shots/>)

The good news is that most burns are minor, can be cared for easily using basic wound care

techniques, and usually don't require emergency medical attention.

Further reading suggestions:

A Comprehensive Guide to Marine Medicine: Eric Weiss MD and Michael Jacobs MD

Wilderness and Rescue Medicine: Jeffrey Isaac PA-C and David Johnson MD

Your own internet search may give other advice but remember that you can't always trust Dr. Google. He's only as good as the questions we ask him, and he doesn't have malpractice insurance.

Have a medical myth you want busted? I'm all ears. Contact me and we'll get to the bottom of it!

Medical Disclaimer: I am not a physician. I am an offshore medicine certified RN with 20+ years of ER experience and a heck of a lot of common sense. Follow up with your healthcare provider for any questions or concerns. Read my full disclaimer here. (<https://shellygalligan.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Terms-and-Conditions-180708.pdf>)



SHELLY GALLIGAN is a USCG 100 ton Captain and a registered nurse with over 25 years of Emergency Room experience. She joyfully shares her experiences with other water lovers, preparing them to intervene effectively in offshore emergencies. Shelly is passionate about life on the water and life in general.

The coast of Scotland: A photo essay

North West Coastline.

[illegible]



North West Coast.

The North West Coast and Highlands

I hope you might like to join me in a little piece of northern paradise, while it's not bathed in wall to wall sunshine (in fact it rains quite a lot) the scenery is spectacular, the wildlife amazing, and it's not overcrowded with boats. Our forays around northern Europe have taken us to many different countries but Scotland is one of our favorite destinations. I hope the following photo journey will give you a small peek into a wonderful place.



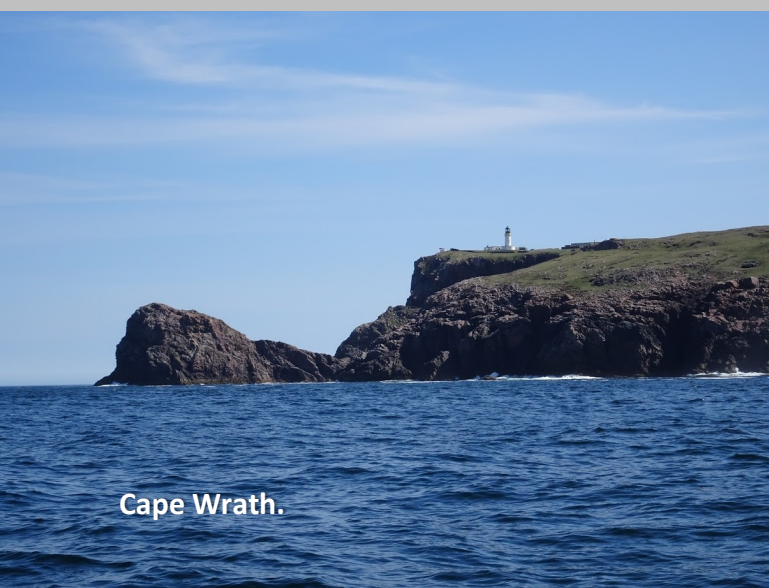
Talmine, Northern Highlands.



**Gairloch Harbour,
Highlands.**



Eas Dubh waterfall, Gairloch.



Cape Wrath.



North West Coast.



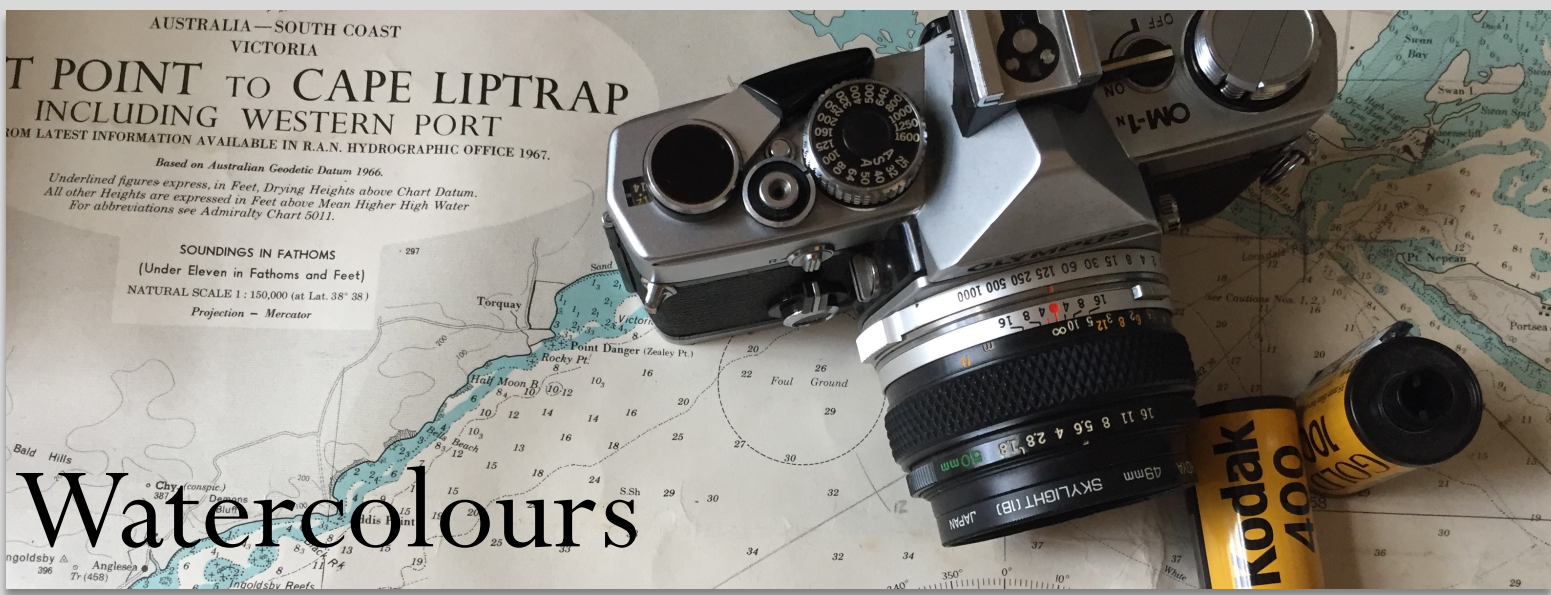
TOP LEFT: Isle Martin, near Ullapool.

ABOVE: Kinlochbervie, Highlands.

LEFT: North West Coast.

Plockton sailing regatta, Highlands.





All photos published go into a draw at the end of the year to win SisterShip merchandise!

RIGHT: Shades of silver at Port Douglas, AUSTRALIA.

Taken by ANNA MELVILLE

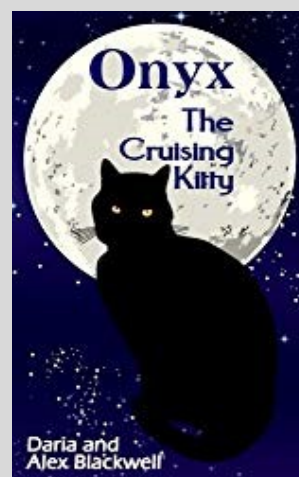
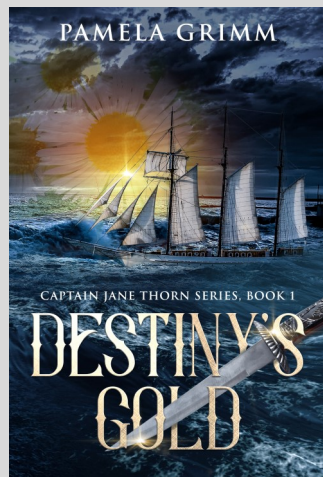
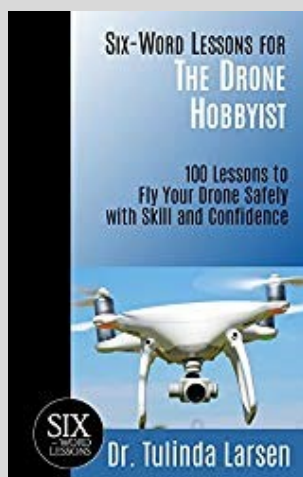
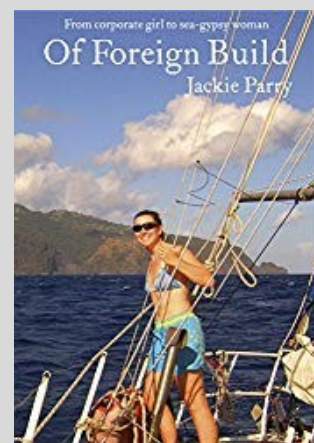
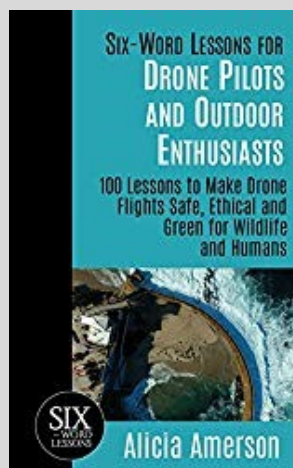
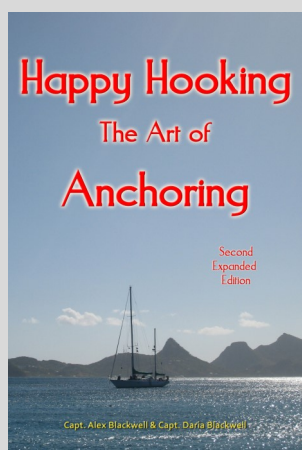
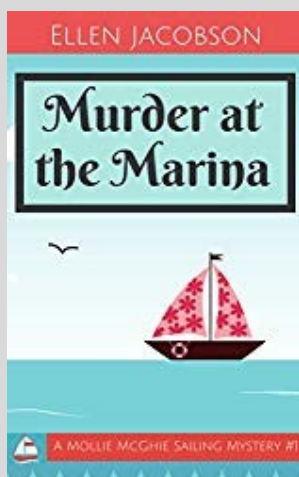
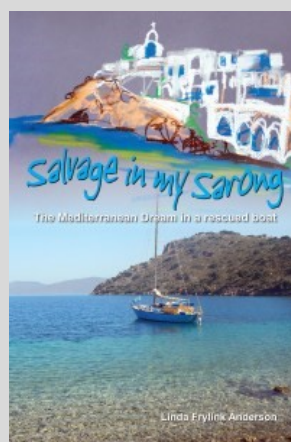
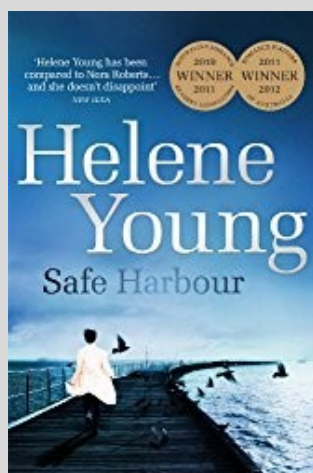
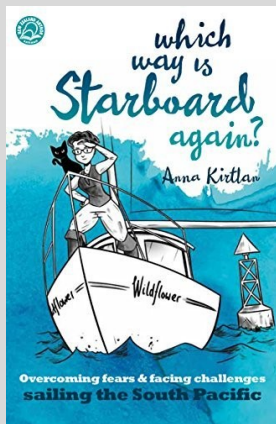


BELOW: Dancing seagull.

Taken by LOUISE PRICE



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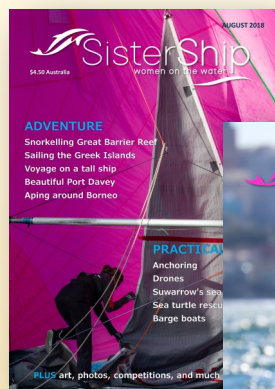
Look for the dolphin!

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