

**April 1988**

**Issue 1!**

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*In this issue:*

- Pirate Women of the Caribbean
- Cathy Hawkins tells her story
- Through the waterways of France
- *and more!*

**COMPETITION**  
**T-shirts to be won —**  
*see inside back page*



## SUBSCRIPTIONS, EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

### **Sistership**

P.O. BOX 1027  
CROWS NEST  
NSW 2065  
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Telephone (046) 26 6740

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**Sistership** is a magazine for women who are concerned with maritime issues. Committed to promoting women's professional and recreational experiences, it is a positive networking forum. **Sistership** seeks to inform, entertain and inspire.

Editorial contributions are welcomed. Format: double-space typescript, using one side of the sheet only; or IBM/Compatible 51/4" floppy disk; or Macintosh disk. Please do **not** send one and only originals. Black and white photographs and artwork are preferred. All contributions will be returned if they are accompanied by SAE. No responsibility is accepted for contributions but great care will be taken.

We want you to write, draw, compose or photograph for **Sistership**. We want all readers to be part of the network by making submissions of every kind. We need to find out what women were, are and hope to be doing the world over.

If you would like to write but feel hesitant, contact us and we will send you some guidelines. The topics are yours to choose, as long as they are relevant to women on and around the water.

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The views expressed in **Sistership** are not necessarily those of the editor.

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**SISTERSHIP**  
P.O. BOX 1027  
CROWS NEST NSW 2065  
AUSTRALIA



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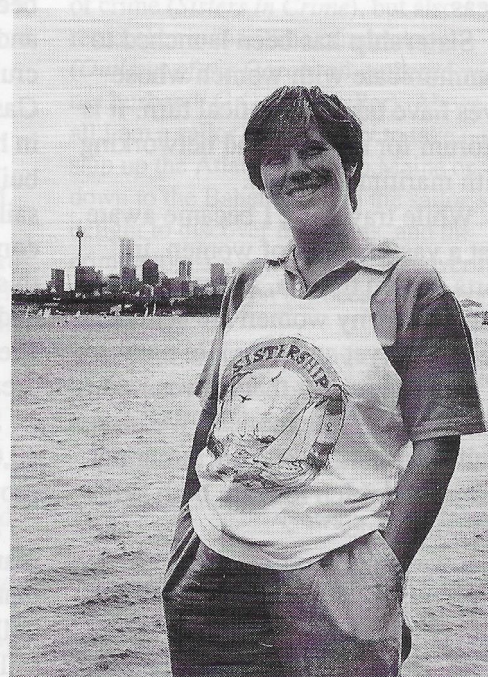
## Editorial

**WELCOME** aboard Sistership. We're under way, at last.

Women at sea? Women by the water? How do we begin to describe all the capacities in which women are associated with the marine environment? We live and work on, in, beside and under the sea. More than half our world is ocean and waterway.

Historically, our myths, legends and language express the close relationships we've had with the sea. Many cultures were, and continue to be, dependent upon their coastal waters and rivers for sustenance. Obviously, fishing and shellfish gathering are two of the most ancient of occupations. They were and are professions for women in many cultures.

Today, women are involved in maritime occupations everywhere, either for our livelihoods or simply because we like the water. We may be literally wetting our feet, or not. We might be in command of vessels or simply crew. We are passengers and support staff. We are artists, dreamers and dolphin-riders. We are scien-



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Sistership's editor, Ruth Boydell



## Wavelength

*Letters to Wavelength, Sistership's letters column, should be kept to a maximum of 150 words, and addressed to Wavelength, Sistership, PO Box 1027, Crows Nest, NSW 2065, Australia.*

CONGRATULATIONS on putting thoughts and feelings into practice. My mother and I have often talked about such ideas with other yachting women.

Both my parents are permanently cruising on their yacht, Tiatoa. Presently they are voyaging to Canada after completing the Melbourne-Osaka race.

I am a woman who loves the sea, sailing and the environment yachting offers in both cruising and racing. I have just completed my four-year apprenticeship as a sailmaker (the first female in New Zealand to do this), and am furthering my career in Sydney.

I look forward to reading Sistership.

Yours on the water,  
Mandi Swan  
Sydney.

I was very interested to read about Sistership. I am a 29 year-old woman sailor and have long thought such a newsletter was overdue. I was part of a 1985 all-female boat, Hera of Hobart, in the Sydney-Hobart race and am keen to make contact with other women re further challenges.

Sincerely,  
Sue Bowly  
Sydney.

Your plans sound great for a women's sailing magazine. No doubt you will have columnists from all over with varying degrees of seamanship skill. I would like to apply for your Advanced Beginners, South East USA position. I will write newsworthy columns such as "How to find the right person to do your teak"; "Appetisers: What Next?" and "Keeping your manicure perfect at sea".

What do you think?

Dee Wilson  
Slidell, Louisiana.

What a great idea! Great name, too!

About time someone thought Sistership up, because so far women's contribution to yachting magazines has been mostly devoted to the recipe pages.

How about including information for cruising women like myself, such as finding women's health clinics in foreign countries? Or some basic phrases for stepping ashore in foreign ports? And quarantine information?

Keep at it!

Tania Heathwood  
Mackay, Queensland.

I started sailing Jubilees from Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron in about 1978. In 1981 I left Australia on a yacht bound for New Zealand from where I intended to fly to Italy to learn Italian. Instead, I sailed to Tonga and accidentally ended up sailing to the Marquesas via Suez and Panama by August 1983.

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### EDITORIAL continued

tists and students, women with ideas.

Sistership has been launched to communicate with women whose lives have taken a nautical turn. It is a forum for meeting and networking with maritime women.

While travelling I became aware that a vast number of women, in ports and on the sea, are certainly isolated. Many women are achieving their goals yet some remain unaware of possibilities for themselves.

Women need role models. We also need a supportive and encouraging climate in which to learn both skills and confidence.

It was important for me. I had enormously favourable responses from people I met while sailing Sketty Belle, my 30ft gaff schooner.

I embarked upon my sailing

career as a charter boat cook, then became first mate (and chief cook and bottlewasher) on a two-handed cruising boat. After meeting Anne Gash, sailing solo around the world in her Folkboat, and Anna Wolf who built her ferro cement ketch and sailed it solo to Scotland, I considered *possibilities*. "I can do this, too," it dawned. Fortunately I had a strong network of family and friends who helped me realise my dream.

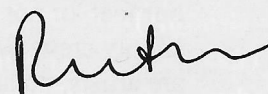
Since 1975 I've sailed close to 40,000 nautical miles, a substantial proportion of that alone.

I have managed to work in the marine industry since returning from that first enlightening cruise. Initially working as a machinist for a sailmaker, I used the skills learnt there to repair other's sails on the

subsequent voyage. As my nautical abilities increased and the miles logged took an impressive slant, I began to skipper craft other than my own. I learnt a *lot* more. I now teach sailing in Sydney, and am still learning.

I had sent out several hundred flyers to friends and colleagues to gauge some idea of how Sistership would be received. *Wavelength*, the letters column, is part of that response.

Sistership will cover much water with the coming issues. It is *your* opportunity to join the crew navigating Sistership's course. I hope you enjoy this voyage.





# pirate women *of the* caribbean

There is evidence of women in many seafaring roles throughout the centuries. 'Women have done everything men have done' says feminist historian Dale Spender. RUTH BOYDELL reports on this comparatively well-documented case of female piracy.

ANNE Bonny and Mary Read both lived by piracy in the West Indies during the early 18th century under "Calico Jack" Rackam.

The three of them supposedly kept the secret of the women's sex from the remainder of the crew so successfully that when they ultimately went to trial for piracy in 1720, and Bonny and Read cried "Milord, we plead our bellies," (the expression used by pregnant women to stay their executions), not only the public but the rest of the crew laughed incredulously.

Anne Bonny was the illegitimate daughter of an Irish attorney. The attorney moved to Carolina with baby Anne and her mother and soon became wealthy enough to purchase a large plantation. By the time Anne was 13 or 14, the obligatory suitors were at her door. She was no doubt something of a "catch". However, Anne showed her "fierce and resolute temper" when



outraged by one of these ardent young men (guess what he had tried to do!), by thrashing him to within inches of his life! Perhaps to prevent further harassment, Anne eloped with a good-for-nothing sailor called Bonny. He applied for Anne's inheritance upon their marriage, only to find Anne's father so enraged by the elopement that she had been disinherited.

The couple went to New Providence in the Bahamas. It was there that John Rackam and Anne became acquainted.

Anne's marriage with Bonny proved a disaster, so she and Rackam tried to get her a "divorce by sale", but it only complicated their situation. (Divorce by sale was an old English practice never legally recognised but sanctioned by use. Based on consent of the male parties, a wife could be transferred by bill of sale from one man to another.)

The new governor was informed and Rackam and Anne were arrested. Anne

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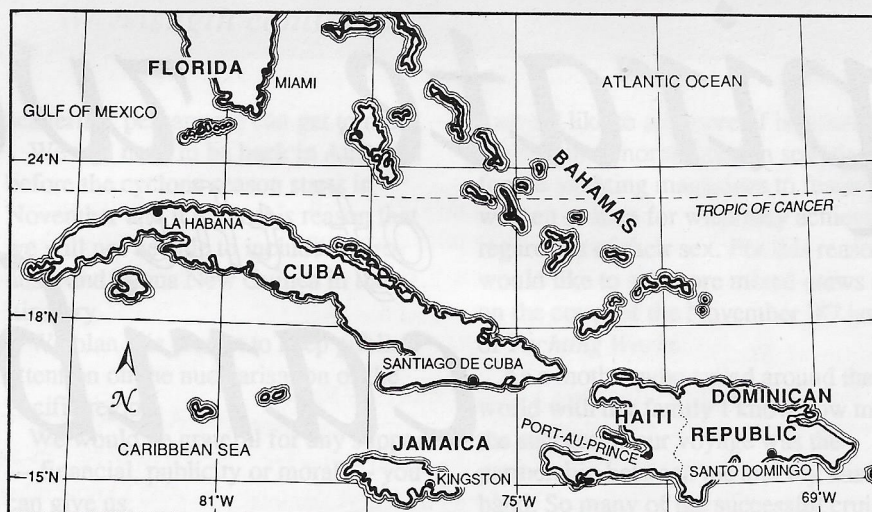
was further promised that she should be stripped and publicly flogged at the repetition of any such "lewdness". Hardly surprisingly, Anne's spirit would not tolerate this.

Anne preferred to go to sea with Rackam dressed as an ordinary seaman. She, Rackam and a few of Rackam's old mates stole a ship which lay in the harbour, and took to piracy. They plundered the shipping from Cuba to Jamaica in that sloop, the fastest vessel in the islands. To the rest of the crew Anne's sex was unknown. She apparently handled the ship and her fighting cutlass "like any man".

One historian continues in patronising vein, "there was nothing platonic in her relationship to Rackam, for in less than a year she had to be set ashore in Cuba and go into seclusion while their first baby was born." (I wonder the price of her secret — sexual bargaining?) There is no further record of that child, but not long after its birth Anne was back at sea again in "her dual role of pirate and pirate's mistress." (It's that second job again!)

Enter Mary Read. Born in England, Mary had been, for the sake of the inheritance due to a now-dead brother, brought up as that boy. Her mother induced her to continue the charade even until the time it was necessary to put Mary to work. Mary, at age 13, began her career as a foot-boy to a Frenchwoman. She did not remain long, and next entered herself on board a man-o-war as a cabin-boy. She quit that also, and then carried arms in a Flemish regiment. Mary grew frustrated with this because, although she proved herself brave and capable, she could not get any commission due to these being bought and sold. Perhaps the change in employment was due in part to difficulties in keeping her secret.

Into the horse regiment went Mary, although that was not long-lived either. Here she met a fellow soldier, with whom she fell in love. They were eventually married and with their funds set up a tavern in Breda, in the Netherlands. The Peace of Utrecht destroyed their business, and her husband died not long after. Mary tried her fortunes dressed as a man again.



The Caribbean, showing main ports of call.

She shipped on a Dutch vessel bound for the West Indies, which was intercepted by Calico Jack and his pirates. One report which stated that pirates habitually stripped their prisoners who refused to join them would explain why Mary became a pirate so readily. Another reason for Mary's becoming part of the ship was that she was the only English-speaking person on that Dutch vessel. She may have felt safer with the pirates.

Mary's sex, like Anne's, was not suspected by anyone on board, says one

both their lives. Rackam's ego was wounded, but he was quietened by the revelation of Mary's secret.

Mary, over a period of some time, is recorded as having found herself a de facto husband. She loved one of the craftsmen who had been kept aboard the pirate vessel. He was at one time challenged to a duel, and to save her lover from the death she thought inevitable, she killed the challenger in a duel she arranged prior to her lover's. He must have had virtues other than fighting to recommend him.

At the eventual trial one of the King's witnesses told how Rackam and his crew were found so much the worse for drink that only three pirates had put up a fight. These three were more heavily manacled in court than the others, and the witness went on to testify they had made furious resistance till overpowered by sheer weight of numbers. The three had used pistols, cutlasses and boarding axes to kill and maim the boarders. Their fury had extended to their own crew when one "youth" discharged "his" pistol among "his" drunken shipmates and cried out that they come out and "fight like men". Mary, Anne and their companion were not going to be captured easily.

Anne Bonny, still in her teens, and Mary Read, in her middle 20s, were both convicted of piracy, with the rest of their

*The witness went on to testify they had made furious resistance till overpowered by sheer weight of numbers.*

historian, until Anne, "who was not altogether so reserved in point of chastity, took a particular liking to her!" The plot thickens . . . I don't believe Anne "took her for a handsome young fellow," but that Anne chose to reveal her own secret to Mary because she was a woman.

The intimacy which developed between the women apparently galled Rackam to the extent that he threatened

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# What's good for the cook is good for the captain

Gender-based assumptions and outright sexism are as much of a problem on the high seas as on land. CANDICE CARSON tells how to survive as a female charterer.

RUTH'S Sistership letter started me thinking about women in the marine industry.

My experience with getting paid for sailing falls into two categories; crewed chartering and deliveries. Most of the women I know who earn a living involving sailing are charter cooks.

I am sending copies of Sistership to sailing friends who I know will be interested, but none of them are cooks. Why is that? Is it the kind of job that attracts certain types of women? Does the job itself crush the independence out of the people who do it?

I found crewed yacht chartering to be definitely a man's world. There are Captains and Cooks. Guess which is the man's job and which is the woman's? Guess which job has status? In five years of chartering I know of two women captains. On the large powerboats (i.e. well-paying) the cooks are often men and called chefs.

When my husband, George, and I traded cruising for chartering I was the same person, but suddenly I was being treated differently. Instead of recognising sexism when I encountered it I began to feel I had to prove I knew how to sail, or was well-read, or was not a second-class citizen.

This is hardly a new situation. Women quit their jobs to raise children. My mother was "just a housewife". Thousands of women hold "pink-collar" jobs. But this was different, it was

happening to me! How do all those women cope? Any wise words from anybody out there?

I found four things that helped. I took myself and my job seriously. I became more assertive. I decided to limit my battlegrounds. I used the support system I had.

I decided that if I was going to have



to cook I might as well really *cook*. I challenged myself to learn all I could about food, wine and cooking.

I put some thought into what I could put up with. I am not skilled at thinking on my feet and tend to either over-react and behave like a harpy, or give in and say nothing. But if I am prepared in advance I can sometimes behave rationally. When I thought my perception might be getting out of whack I used George as a barometer. Would they ask the captain to get their suntan lotion? Would they call him "honey"?

The third thing that helped was when I came to the realisation that I was not going to change either the charter industry or some of the guests' attitudes. I would allow sexism to exist on a broad scale without getting angry

but I would not allow people to treat me, personally, in a derogatory manner.

The last thing that was a big help was my husband. George is a very secure man who likes women and treats them as equals. No matter what awful thing was happening, I always knew he would support me. Even if *all* the guests were from Mars (which never happened; there was always at least one guest I liked and could relate to), with George on my side I never felt outnumbered.

My hindsight vision is 20/20. I am amazed it took me so long to figure out why I wasn't deliriously happy. I had an ideal lifestyle, what more could I want? I thought there must be something mentally wrong with me. Why was I so defensive, so angry? Where had my self-confidence gone? Why didn't I try harder to find another cook who shared my frustrations? When we would sit around and the men talked about boats and the women about food, I'd think "I could be back in suburbia". But I didn't try and change things. On second thoughts, maybe I will send Sistership to some cooks.

---

*Candice Carson and her husband, George, operated their charter yacht, Freight Train, from St Thomas, US Virgin Islands. They have since sold Freight Train and are currently on an adventure to New Zealand. Candice has recently compiled a family cookbook.*



# Waterways

**CHARLOTTE BARNARD** and her husband, **Kenneth**, travelled on their yacht, *Gay Elizabethan*, a 32ft sloop, during the late 60s and early 70s. One of their journeys took them through the heart of Burgundy by the great canal system of France.

IT WAS one of those lovely summer days in June and we were afloat, afloat in the heart of France, making our leisurely way through her rich pastoral and vineyard country aboard our 32ft sloop along the Canal of Burgundy. Ahead the quiet waters of the canal mirrored perfectly the sentinel poplars lining the straight banks, while astern their reflection had become fragmented into rippling streamers of dancing light, caught by the wash of our passing craft.

The idea of such a journey through the canals and rivers of France had come while we were poring over a map of that country, studying her river and canal routes which allow a craft entering from one of the Channel ports to follow her inland waterways and finally reach the Mediterranean.

France's waterways are deservedly famous. By canal and lock construction, extensions to her natural river system have been achieved so that waterborne transport can pass from north to south, east to west, throughout the land. The 1700s and 1800s were her main canal-building era, culminating in the fact that France has about 8,000km of navigable waterways.

These waterways have borne, and still do bear, those fleets of sturdy barges, horse or donkey-drawn in times gone by, diesel-powered today, with their loads of heavy materials. They are also utilised by yachts, making for the Mediterranean, whose skippers prefer to avoid the ocean passage.

Our route was to follow the Seine, its tributary the Yonne and then take the Canal of Burgundy and so link up with the River Saone, the Rhone and into the

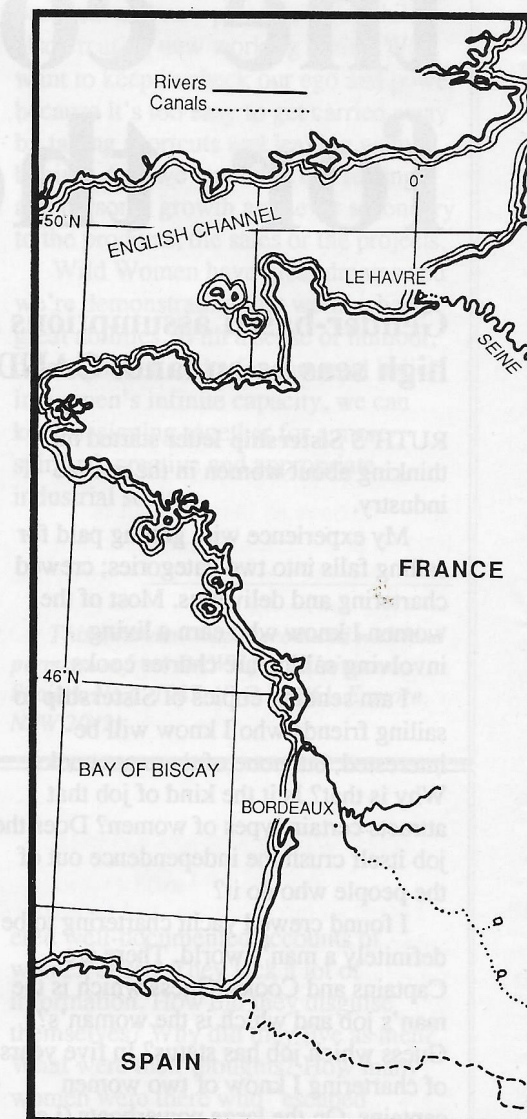
Mediterranean Sea.

After crossing the English Channel, we entered France at Le Havre where the mast was taken out and lashed on deck in preparation for the bridges ahead. Henceforth we were to be under motor. From Le Havre we followed the winding Seine to Paris, but not before encountering our first lock — at Rouen. This had to be negotiated in the company of groups of huge Seine barges — black monsters — and many were the hazards of handling a small yacht within a crowded lock.

Along the course of the Seine you can spot the next lock when you see the great barrage, or weir, lying across the width of the river, forming an artificial waterfall, and the lock constructed at the side. Generally there was a group of barges moored along the riverbank, waiting to enter the lock. We found it wise to adopt the routine of waiting well to the rear of this flotilla. We had only an eight-horsepower auxiliary engine; if we were too close to one of the monsters with its churning propellers a vessel such as ours could be caught in the turbulent wash and become unmanageable in the confined entrance to the lock. This delaying tactic often resulted in the lock-keeper signalling us frantically to get a move on. Never mind, we must just stay away from those propellers, and nose our way into the lock chamber.

Safely tied up to one of the stationary barges, it seems no longer the monster to be avoided but a friendly hippopotamus to lie alongside.

Lock time is smoke time. The offer of a cigarette opens the way for a chat with some of the barge folk. However, it



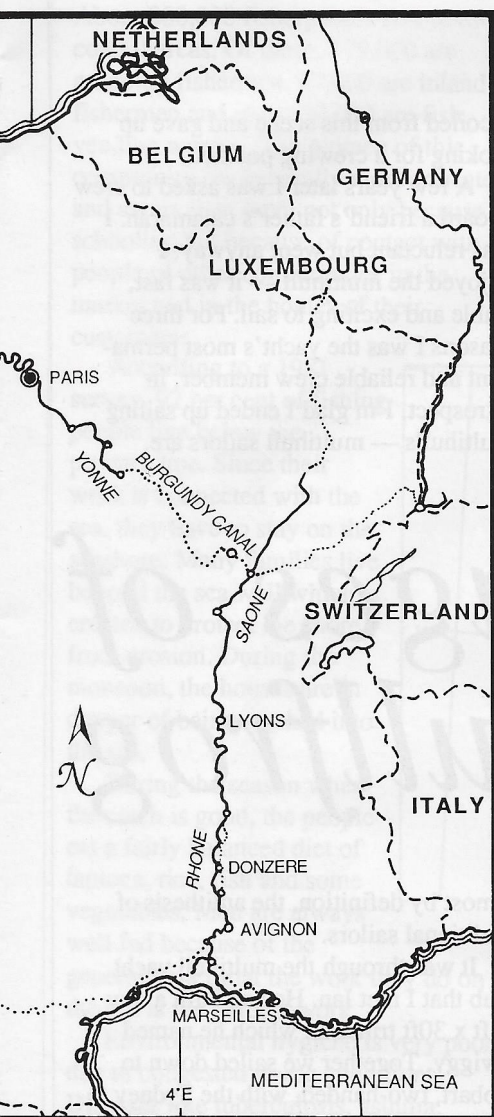
is only a short respite for the water has steadily risen and the gates are opening . . . and we are out onto the river once more, the released barges hurrying past with waves of farewell.

And so at last we reached the Canal of Burgundy. Here we really were in the rich heart of France, the land of the great family of wines of Burgundy.

The locks on the canals are much smaller than those of the rivers. There is no barrage, and the lock-chamber comprises the width of the canal. The old lock gates are worked by hand. As a craft approaches the *eclusier* emerges



# of France



from the cottage, which is usually bright with flowers, a flourishing kitchen garden, plus hosts of children, dogs and waterfowl, and starts winding those slow gates and dealing with the sluices prior to ushering in the craft.

The lock-keeper is usually a war veteran, or Madame Eclusiere, a widow. On the Canal of Burgundy most of the *eclusiers* seemed to be women. They came in all shapes and sizes. Some were attractive young mothers with scores of children, who wore gloves to operate the gates. Others, bold and stolid, awaited us with arms akimbo. A few seemed to be

too old and frail for the job. Nearly all were pleasant, a few disagreeable — even frightening.

One dull windy evening, the landscape grey and forbidding, in the waning light we were approaching what we intended to be our last lock before tying up for the night. A maximum day; more than 20 locks since early morn. There was Madame Eclusiere awaiting us, stationary on the lock wall above the gates, her long grey hair swept by the wind, crooking her finger to summon us on and in. Without giving us a chance to help her she wound the entrance gates closed, then scuttled away to open the sluices.

As the boat rose and came level with the cottage garden, she worked away at opening the forward gates. She then pointed to where, about a quarter of a mile ahead, we could discern the next lock. We got her meaning. She had to operate the two locks herself and wanted us to give her time to precede us along the tow-path and so get the gates opened for our arrival.

In vain we shouted that we would trot along and operate the next lock ourselves — but we were talking to her back as she had scurried off. In the half light we could discern her arrival at the lock ahead where she proceeded to push and wind as though the devil himself was at her tail — instead of two weary mariners who didn't want to go through the second lock anyway. Once we were in, however, and the craft tied up, she dissolved into a wreath of smiles, almost apologetic for having kept us waiting, and was transformed into yet another helpful Madame Eclusiere, intent on performing her job well. *Vive la France!*

The next stage of our journey through the inland waterways after leaving the Canal of Burgundy took us onto the Saone and to our arrival at Lyons. This city is at the junction of the Saone and Rhone rivers. Here they run parallel for a while until the mild and

navigable Saone is absorbed by the furious current of the Rhone in its descent to the Mediterranean. Navigation on the Rhone has always been active, albeit dangerous, as it achieves the swiftest current of Europe's navigable rivers.

Then came the memorable day which brought us to the last lock on the journey, the final lock on the Rhone: the Grand Canyon of locks, the deepest single-chamber lock in the world, at 25 metres. With the engine running slowly we passed through those giant portals and into the silence of the lock chamber, which is some 200 metres in length. We threw lines over the huge bollards recessed in the walls — floating bollards. No paying out of lines. So easy.

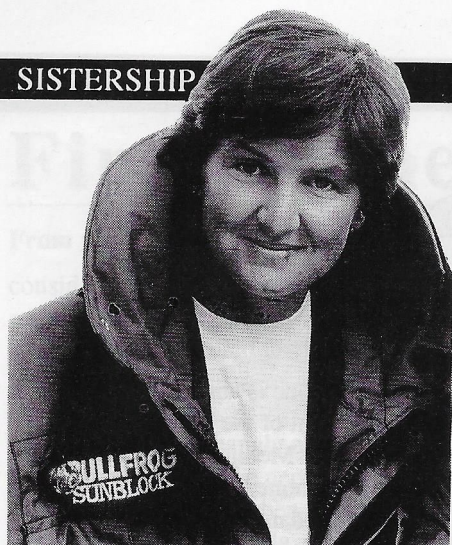
The gates closed behind us. Not a movement on the surface of the water as the rapid descent began, that 25-metre drop in six minutes for which the lock is famous. Perfect control as the drop was completed. We had arrived. Concrete and steel gates ahead rose like a theatre curtain to push-button control — no slow winding of handles here. We passed under those raised portals, ducking to avoid the rain of drips, onto the last stretch of by-pass canal which led back onto the Rhone once more.

And so we had passed through the great lock of Donzere. There was still more of the Rhone to descend, and this included the stretches known as the Region of the Rapids which carried us past Avignon and its famous bridge at record speeds. Later, we passed the town of Beaucaire and we swung over-and-out of the Rhone current to enter the lateral canal by which we went finally in our ship down to the sea.

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*Charlotte Barnard prepared several broadcasts for ABC Radio at the time of her travels in France, of which this is one. She currently works as a volunteer at the Sydney Maritime Museum.*





*I'VE BEEN asked to write about my sailing experiences, so I prop up the small table hinged to the inside of the hull and set down my pen and papers.*

*I can hear the persistent sound of a wire halyard stirred by the breeze, tapping against the mast. My yacht, Bullfrog, tugs at her mooring lines and water slaps her sides. My mind wanders back into the past...*

Australian sailor CATHY HAWKINS, whose recently published book, *Return in the Wake*, describes her adventures at sea, talks about her experiences in the world of shorthanded ocean racing.

sailing, living at sea, living with a dream. It has not been an easy passage for us. So much has changed, so much has been learnt, but still we're sailing together...

I started sailing when I was five, further back than I can remember. Mum and Dad bought me and my older sister, Anton, a Manly Junior dinghy and later I got my own boat, a Flying Ant. Those years in a dinghy gave me an inherent

recoiled from this scene and gave up looking for a crewing position.

A few years later I was asked to crew aboard a friend's father's catamaran. I was reluctant but went anyway. I enjoyed the multihull — it was fast, stable and exciting to sail. For three seasons I was the yacht's most permanent and reliable crew member. In retrospect, I'm glad I ended up sailing multihulls — multihull sailors are,

# The voyages of Twiggy and Bullfrog

... I THINK about how far my friend Ian and I have come as a team and how far I have come as a person since we set sail from home in 1980.

Between us we have covered nearly 120,000 sea miles — nearly four times around the world. We have voyaged in two trimarans, two friends, really: Twiggy and Bullfrog. During the seven years we have spent as much time at sea as we have on land. We have sailed all the oceans and lost one boat, poor Twiggy.

It has been a fine life, living close to the elements: a life that has taught me much about myself, the sea and my relationship with Ian. All our wages and savings, every cent we've had, has slipped under the hulls of our two boats. Nearly all our friends are now married, have children and own homes. Ian and I are uncle and aunt to the children of our younger brothers. And still we're

understanding of sailing which I was never to forget.

But sailing, in those early days, was only an aberration from my gruelling competitive swimming and water polo routine. It wasn't until after I left University and started my career as a journalist that sailing began to feature more prominently in my life.

I wanted to start sailing yachts so I went to all the local yacht clubs and put my name on their notice boards. But I had no offers. I was, after all, a woman. Even in the late 70s women were still not particularly welcome on a yacht. There was so much scepticism about what we could offer. My approaches brought reactions which made me feel foolish for even trying. Sailing in the 70s seemed strictly a boys-only activity, a chance to play hooky from their responsibilities and to replay the exploits of their fading youth. I quickly

almost by definition, the antithesis of traditional sailors.

It was through the multihull yacht club that I met Ian. He had built a tiny 31ft x 30ft trimaran which he named Twiggy. Together we sailed down to Hobart, two-handed, with the Sydney to Hobart fleet. I revelled in shorthanded sailing. I felt so instrumental in getting the boat from point A to point B. I was responsible for so many things.

It was after the Hobart passage that we decided to sail from Australia to England to compete in shorthanded ocean races — they didn't seem to exist in Australia in the early 80s.

It seemed the easiest decision in the world to drop everything, resign from our careers and leave. In retrospect, I guess we were really leaving in order to put a bit of meaning and spiritual well-being into our suburban lives. We wanted to get close to nature but we also



wanted to get closer to ourselves. The sea was an ideal place for us, it was isolated, demanding and limited.

We steered a course up the east coast of Australia through a series of races to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. From there, we cruised through the Torres Strait to Darwin where we prepared Twiggy to cross the Indian Ocean. In between the excitement and joy of racing and cruising and the anticipation of setting off on a longer voyage, we had to learn to live with one another.

Without tolerance and understanding, it quickly became very confining on board Twiggy. I often thought it was probably lonelier at sea with each other than it might have been alone. Alone, you were answerable to no-one, suited yourself, used the limited space as you willed. Together, we had to practise overdoses of consideration, tolerance, understanding and patience.

We made landfalls at Christmas Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Rodriguez Island, Mauritius and Durban,

South Africa, where we re-provisioned, boosted our dwindling kitty and worked on Twiggy. From Durban we sailed to Cape Town, then up the Atlantic to England via St Helena, Fernando de Noronha and the Azores.

We raced successfully for a few months before lining up for the Two-handed Round Britain and Ireland Yacht Race. Halfway through the race, while we were winning our class, we pitch-poled at 60 degrees north into the cold

**Continued page 10**





# Twiggy and Bullfrog

From page 9

North Atlantic. Ian was trapped inside the upturned hull and I was outside. An axe was stowed outside so I hacked a hole in Twiggy's hull to free him.

Eighteen hours later we were rescued by another competitor and were taken to the next race stopover — Lerwick in the Shetland Islands. Six days later, Twiggy was salvaged by an Orkney fishing trawler. We righted her, stitched her sails and sleeved her broken mast to carry on. When we arrived back in Plymouth we found sponsorship with Nicholas Laboratories, who chose to rename her Rennie, after their digestive tablets.

The next race was La Route du Rhum, the French singlehanded race across the Atlantic from St Malo to Guadeloupe in the French West Indies. I'd lost too much confidence in Twiggy to do the race but Ian was keen to have a go. But, halfway across the Atlantic Twiggy pitched again. Ian was

rescued by another competitor and he abandoned her in mid-Atlantic. We had cruised 37,000 miles safely in Twiggy but she was just too small to be raced hard across oceans.



THE TIMES that followed were less happy, less sure. Without Twiggy we were like castaways. There was only the prospect of returning home to Australia to a life without a boat, without a dream. But our souls were made of stronger stuff. As the days became weeks and weeks became months, another dream took hold. It was so simple. We'd build another boat. We had no money, no home and it would be one of the hardest things we could ever do. Yet we knew we'd stay together and could rely on one another to see the project through.

Eighteen months later we had built our new trimaran, launched her and were

sailors again. We have since raced and cruised her up and down the east coast of Australia, both ways across the Tasman and through the Pacific. In two years she has 32,000 nautical miles on her log. Two thousand of those miles I have sailed solo and those passages have not been without their trials and triumphs.

I've written a very personal book about my adventures at sea. It's called *Return in the Wake* and it is published by John Ferguson Publishers. It's a story of our dream and sacrifices to sail; it's also about understanding myself — all my strengths and weaknesses. Short-handed ocean racing, with my best friend Ian, still remains my passion and challenge.

## EDITOR'S NOTE:

Since Cathy wrote this article Bullfrog has undergone a change of livery. Cathy and Ian have found a new sponsor for their shorthanded Bicentennial sailing season. They will be sailing under the name "Verbatim".

Sailing School  
Yacht Charter

# East Sail

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# BOSUN'S LOCKER

⚓ 'Australians and the Sea' conference to be held in Sydney in October 1988. Contact *Australian Association for Maritime History*.

⚓ International Commission for Maritime History Conference 'Food for the World: Maritime Trade and shipping of Food-stuffs' is the proposed theme for the conference to be held in Madrid, Spain, in 1990.

⚓ *Oceanology International 88*. March 8-11, 1988. An exhibition to be held at Brighton Metropole, Brighton, Sussex. Further details from *Spearhead Exhibitions Ltd., Rowe House, 55/59 Fife Rd, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 1TA, UK*.

⚓ Australia's First International Dolphin and Whale Conference, sponsored by *Dolphin Encounters*, will be held in May at Valla Beach, NSW. Contact The Secretary, 44 Ford St, Bellingen, NSW, 2454.

⚓ Patricia St John and her Mid-Point staff will be leading dolphin research trips in late spring and summer (mid 1988) to the Bahamas Banks. Participants will swim with wild spotted dolphins and observe and document their behaviour. Contact *MID-POINT Inc., Box 17, Route 133, Bridgewater, CT 06752, USA*.

⚓ **Dolphin Watch Day** in Southern California on March 19th, 1988. Sponsored by Prof. Dennis Kelly and the Coastal Dolphin Survey Project at Orange Coast College is a population census and identification of the dolphins that inhabit that coast. Call *Dolphin Data Base* at 213-305-7221. P.O. Box 5657, Playa Del Rey, CA 90296-5657, USA.

⚓ **Seal Watch 88** is a guided expedition to Canada's Gulf of St Lawrence where people may observe wild baby harp seals. After environmentalists' efforts to protect the seals succeeded, eastern Canada's local economy appears to have declined. By having tourists visit the seals, the region will receive a financial boost, and the seals may become more profitable alive than dead. Contact *Promotional Tours Travel Marketing, Inc., 651 Washington St, Brookline, MA 02146, USA*.

⚓ **Women's Committee of the Yachting Association of NSW**. Due to the fact Sydney Harbour will be closed during the Naval Review in October, the Women's Committee of the Yachting Association of NSW have advised that the Women's Championship Yacht Race will be held over till Easter 1989. The Women's Committee also advises that future meetings will be held 12th April, 14th June, 9th August and on during 1988, at Sports House, Sydney, at 6pm. The Committee tells us that Nicki Green has been successful in the Olympic Trials held in Adelaide in January. Jessica Crisp has been successful in both

the Mistral and Youth World Boardsailing Championships recently held in Sydney. Both women are from Sydney.

⚓ **The Panama Canal Commission** established an apprentice program in March 1987 through which persons can qualify to take the examination for a mate's licence for steam or motor vessels operating in the canal. Previously, those seeking such a licence had to be either a graduate of an approved maritime academy, or someone who had stood 260 eight-hour watches as a licensed officer in charge of a deck watch on a steam or motor vessel greater than 75ft in length, to qualify to take the examination. Reproduced from *Soundings*, Professional Mariners Alliance, Inc.

⚓ *Alone in a Crowd: Women in the trades tell their stories*. By Jean Reith Schroedel, Philadelphia, Pa., Temple University Press, 1985, paperback, 268 pp.

Riveting accounts of the barriers, deprivations, setbacks and triumphs of some of the pioneer women who entered male-dominated trades in the 1970s. Among the 25 women interviewed are a ship-scaler and a sailor on a tanker. They describe the drawbacks of their occupations: gruelling physical labour, injuries, fatigue, tension and the psychological strain of continually having to prove themselves in an often overbearing sexist male environment.

On the plus side are the higher pay, greater economic and psychological independence, pride in the development of skills with tools and machines, and in some cases, enjoyment of increased physical strength. (Review from *MINERVA: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military*.)

## ⚓ KILLER BALLOONS?

The US *National Science Teachers Association* is planning a USA-wide release of 300,000 helium balloons in April. Because of the ingestion problems associated with such materials in sea turtles and marine mammals, and the increase of pollution and litter in our oceans, an alternative has been proposed. This alternative calls for a nation-wide contest for development of biodegradable balloons instead of the launching of balloons. To express opinions contact: William Aldridge, Executive Director for NSTA, 1742 Connecticut Ave N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, USA.

Continued page 21



# Wild Women on board

IN JUNE 1986, former Senator Susan Ryan, then Minister assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women, announced details of 21 projects representing women which were allocated a total of \$136,245.

The funding came from the National Consultation and Assistance Program for Women. Of the \$136,245, an \$11,000 grant went to Wild Women Surfboards of Angourie, NSW. At that time, one newspaper report said: "One of the projects in NSW aims to research and develop surfing for women, a sport dominated by men but one in which two Australian women, Pam Burridge and Jodie Cooper, rank among the best in the world."

That, however, was probably one of the only media reports that addressed the Wild Women Surfboards project in a favourable light. Since the grant, the Wild Women have been a regular topic of parliamentary debate with many who have voiced opposition to the funding as "a useless and gender-biased project". That gem comes from a *Daily Mirror* editorial. One is left wondering who an Assistance Program for Women is meant to have bias toward.

While researching this article, it became painfully obvious that women's surfing in Australia and, in fact, the world, has a media silence hiding it. I went hopefully to a local large newsagency looking for a few graphics of women surfing to accompany this article. I then spent one hour flicking through every page of the latest editions of *Surfing*, *Surfing Snaps*, *Waves*, *Surfer*, *Tubes*, *Tracks*, *Australia's Surfing Life* and *Australian Surfing World* to find not one photograph of a woman on board. Needless to say, naked

and near naked women were of no shortage in the advertising sections.

And that is really just the beginning of the sexism and blatant discrimination. It is staggering to have recently learnt that the Federal Government spends more than \$24 million every year on men's sport. Meanwhile, we have been led to believe via the media that grants to Wild Women and "other such projects" are the direct cause of lack of funding and staffing to public hospitals. At least, that was the line taken by several boring Liberal Party politicians in the 1987 election campaign.

Not surprisingly, the \$24 million spent on men's sport wasn't mentioned.

*‘Not surprisingly, the \$24 million spent on men's sport wasn't mentioned.’*

The fact also that a 1986 report, "Girls, Physical Education and Self-Esteem", which found that funding for boys' sport has always outweighed the funding for girls' sport, was never mentioned during the tirade against Wild Women, again highlights the deliberate misinformation spread by our petty politicians and lying media.

I spoke with Cougar Wiece-Otter, who designs and manufactures Wild Women Surfboards, about how Wild

Women are creatively involved in changing the image and profile of Australian women in surfing.

**COUGAR:** Most people have only heard about us since we received the grant, but I've actually been making surfboards for over two years. I had already developed the concept and design for a women's board, so the \$11,000 really only accelerated what I was already doing. It was nice to have some money to do it with. I originally applied for \$15,000 and I heard that 400 other projects also made submissions. Apparently the government was wanting to steer money away from the more traditional areas of women's work and recognise the importance of women's recreation.

Well, since the grant we've had heaps of media coverage, probably more than any of the other projects. We've been on the radio, television and in the papers, of course. There was even a six month period where we were debated each week in parliament. You'd think they had more pressing matters to talk about, but the Office of the Status of Women had to answer questions from the Prime Minister about the Wild Women funding. We were being used as convenient scapegoats to run down all women's projects and to jeopardise their futures. We are still seen as a "risk project" and many politicians continue to talk about how the initial idea of the funding to women's recreation is a complete waste of time and money. In questioning this project they are in fact undermining the existence of the Office of the Status of Women, which no doubt many would like to see dissolved.

There continue to be many articles in the papers about "rubbish grants" to

Illustration by AMALINA WALLACE



For women who want to ride the wild surf of Australia, there has never been a better time — Wild Women Surfboards, of Angourie, NSW, are designing and manufacturing surfing equipment especially for women. DEBORAH ALCORN spoke to Cougar Wicce-Otter, the powerhouse behind the dream.

"left-wing commies" and the Wild Women are often at the top of their list. The irony, of course, is that all this publicity has put many of our aims and ideals much more in public view. And that has caused a polarity in opinion between those who value radical economic and social movements and those who fear change in any area, even the surfing industry. I think the government regrets the day it ever heard about Wild Women! \$11,000 is really such a little amount of money, but the way we've used it has guaranteed maximum impact on the public and I guess that's where the greatest threat lies.

DEBORAH: What motivated you to begin this project even before submission?

COUGAR: Some time ago I studied yacht design. What I was taught was how to design yachts for six-foot, white, Anglo-Saxon men, as they are supposed to be the "average" world person. This same "understanding" pretty much applies to surfboard design.

Yacht design is concerned a lot with "ergonomics" — developing correct-shaped equipment for the body — so I applied that principle to my board design. Women tend to have narrower shoulders and that alone makes enormous impact on board use. It means that the nose has to be narrower, and the buoyancy and width have to be adjusted. Thinking about that inspired me to do some research and design boards for women. Surfing is a way of life where I come from, and I knew women surfers were having to work extra hard anyway to train, compete and make a name in surfing without coping with boards unsuited to the female body.

DEBORAH: I should imagine boards

aren't the only area where change is needed.

COUGAR: That's for sure. In the surfing industry, everything from ankle ropes to swimming costumes, board wax and wetsuits are big bucks products.

Since the grant and the establishment of our Wild Women industry we are branching out into wetsuit designs more suitable for women. These days you simply can't get wetsuits that fit the varying shapes of women's bodies. And the reason is simple: women aren't making them.

It's understandable that men have less of an idea about the specific needs of women, especially in an area that

*"I was taught how to design... for six-foot, white, Anglo-Saxon men."*

women have not traditionally been involved. But I'm not so naive not to also know that big design companies aren't even interested in manufacturing goods specifically for surfing women because they don't see a big enough demand or profit. But then, nobody wanted yellow board shorts with purple dots until the designer companies put them in the shops. Then they were snatched up because everyone wanted to be "in fashion".

It's the same for women's wetsuits. Put them in the shops and women will buy them. Not just because they're fashionable, but because there is a real need for them. Wild Women want to provide goods and services that are relevant to this totally unexplored market and while we can only scratch the surface, at least we can be an example to other designers and manufacturers.

DEBORAH: Can you tell us more about the Wild Women industry and the struggles involved?

COUGAR: There is a long story attached to our fast growing industry; the stories of our dreams, the practical realities and the opposition.

In the very beginning I was manufacturing a few Wild Women boards from my home in Angourie. But I was pressured by the local council to stop that practice or move to a manufacturing industrial estate. That started a long debate between the council and many Angourie residents about the difference between cottage industry and commercial enterprise.

Cottage industry is based on what you make, bake or grow and can be exchanged for money or services. Areas of high unemployment, like Angourie, often lead to the development of much cottage industry.

Well, the council kept insisting, despite lots of letters from local craftspeople and sympathetic local newspaper reports, that anybody who made anything from their home was involved in manufacturing and needed a licence.

Wild Women received a lot of

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# Wild Women on board

From page 13

support from the local potters, weavers, knitters and so on, and it seems that whenever there has been any discrimination against us it has led to public debate and support. In the end we had to move to an industrial estate.

This news was pretty devastating at first, but then a miracle happened. I found a place to rent in Yamba Industrial Estate for \$15 a week! We expected to pay a lot more. And we got a lot of active support and advice from building inspectors and the Department of Labour and Industry, which made the move a lot easier. And that's where we are now.

**DEBORAH:** What of the dreams and practical realities?

**COUGAR:** As I've said, Wild Women Surfboards grew out of the need to validate surfing as a lifestyle for women. We want to serve as a stimulus to encourage not only women who are already surfing, but those who have never seen surfing as a recreation or work option.

Our dream is to give women a chance to learn skills that are usually inaccessible and to further contribute to the elevation of women's status. This is an important part of our vision: promoting positive images of women in a practical and otherwise men's field.

As well as producing all styles of boards — body, knee, Malibu, ski and sailboard — we are making available within each style a range of boards to suit varying individual surfing skills. We make buoyant, stable beginner's boards through to more refined, advanced boards. We also give supportive advice and guidance to women about the advantages of each board so they will have the one best suited to their level of skill and fitness.

We also sponsor women in contests and are always looking for more women who are interested in competing. Eventually we hope that our lobbying and media exposure will secure equal prize money and equal opportunity for women in the surfing industry.

Already our boards are being used by competition winners in NSW and Australian tournaments. Women riders have said that the Wild Women boards make an enormous difference and that their riding has improved so much that they are now winning competitions when they didn't before. For me, there is no higher praise or recommendation than that. Of course the stages between first learning to surf and becoming a competition winner are long, demanding and tough.

Wild Women also want to be actively involved in making the experience of riding waves creative, educational and spiritual. The language that surrounds surfing is often aggressive,

*“We don't see ourselves in competition with the boys or the boys' industry. We are exploring our own ways, and they theirs.”*

like “ripping up waves” and “beating the tide”, and too often the images are sexual, alluding to the “riding” of a woman. Wild Women don't promote images of competing with nature; rather, we encourage a flow with her.

We do this in our workshops which are mainly organised by Cedar. We use videos to observe and correct surfing techniques, teach proper warm-up exercises and safety procedures, and instruct how to correctly identify surf conditions and weather patterns. And we always provide creative childcare during the workshops.

The response to our first two workshops in Angourie was overwhelming. Forty-five women attended our “Introduction to Surfing”, including women who identified as housewives

and schoolgirls. Under the terms of the funding, we organised nine workshops, including some for differently-abled women.

Over 250 women attended and through this sharing of ideas we've developed a contact network so that support in learning and improving surfing skills is now available.

It's so important for women surfers who are isolated to know they have support in dealing with male intimidation, sexist jeers and harassment in the water and on the beach. Sometimes it can be really frightening to be the only woman on the waves. Our network helps overcome some of the fears and naturally serves to further break down the sex role stereotyping.

**DEBORAH:** I know your boards are having quite an impact on the market. From all accounts, their visual presentation is unique.

**COUGAR:** Well, not only do we produce boards for individual needs — I've just designed a body board for a 63-year-old grandmother — we also individually handpaint them with a colourful design. It gives the boards a more personal feel and it's our creative way of putting art back into everyday life. It's a spiritual expression. A way of restoring women's art and craft by the beautification of useful things. Mass production simply can't generate that feeling.

We don't see ourselves in competition with the boys or the boys' industry. We are exploring our own ways, and they theirs. Sometimes we can help each other, but mostly as women we must develop our own culture, creativity, industry and work ethics.

**DEBORAH:** Besides making surfboards, what do you mean by being involved in industry?

**COUGAR:** Our factory in the Yamba Industrial Estate now employs six women. We also have a boatshed in the Yamba Boat Harbour which we are developing as an art studio and a body-

Continued page 20



# Something fishy . . .

**The Fish Marketing Authority is not an organisation known for its female personnel. ANNETTE FORREST occupies a valuable, senior position in its market development and promotions department. She describes her work in one of New South Wales's major food industries as 'a challenge'.**

I REMEMBER arriving for my first day of work at the Fish Marketing Authority in Pyrmont, Sydney and being totally overwhelmed by the smell, the bustle, the noise and the activities of the daily fish market. "Is this for me?" I asked myself.

Somewhat daunted by the "little world" tucked away in the backwater of Blackwattle Bay, I took my courage in my hands, donned my gumboots, and visited the auction floor. To my surprise the entire place was occupied by men and I was greeted by many smart remarks and wolf whistles.

Fortunately I retained my sense of humour, and over the last eight years have come to love the fishing industry in

NSW and all those wonderful characters involved in it. I also enjoy eating *all* seafood.

The Fish Marketing Authority is a semi-Government, statutory organisation responsible for the orderly marketing of seafood within the State of NSW. Financially independent, the Authority derives its funds from commissions on sales of fish. The NSW marketing system consists of 22 co-operatives and the main Sydney Fish Market.

I started at the Fish Marketing Authority as a secretary, then trained as a home economist, completing my studies in 1984. I was appointed promotions officer and in 1986 took over the role of manager, market development and promotions.

The market development and promotions department is responsible for creating an awareness of NSW seafood and to achieve this, promotional, educational and retail campaigns are undertaken.

In my position as manager, I am responsible for a team of nine people (all females, which is somewhat unusual in the male-oriented industry).

The position has had many challenges, not the least being the need to obtain credibility in the fishing industry. Being a female-dominated department in a male-dominated industry, we have to be constantly on our toes!

Much of our work involves daily contact with buyers at the auction, of which some 80 per cent are of Greek descent.

Part of my work involves media liaison, working with food writers and



**Annette Forrest — kept her sense of humour on an all-male auction floor.**

producing booklets, brochures and posters promoting NSW seafood, in conjunction with television appearances and radio interviews. Much creativity, imagination and patience is required.

Our role is important for not only do we have to supply the consumer with accurate, up-to-date information; we are also constantly educating the public on the wealth of our "hauls" from the sea. In fact, at the Sydney Fish Market we have over 100 species of beautifully iced fish and shellfish going under the auctioneer's hammer daily.

Finally, and certainly not least, we play a major role in gaining positive, on-going general promotion and publicity for the authority and its activities.

A fully-equipped test kitchen is operated where original, innovative recipes are created by the Authority's home economist.

I'd like to share these with you and I'd be delighted to send you complimentary recipes. Please write to me:—

**Annette Forrest**  
**Manager, Market Development and Promotions**  
**Gipps Street**  
**Pyrmont NSW 2009, Australia**

## **FRYIN' TONIGHT!**

### **Curry-coated Trevally with coconut**

*(Also suitable: Sea Bream, Flathead, Gemfish and Blackfish.)*

**Serves 4**

500g Trevally fillets, skinned  
 1/2 cup dried breadcrumbs  
 1/4 cup dessicated coconut  
 1 tablespoon curry powder  
 2 tablespoons polyunsaturated oil

### **METHOD**

1. Remove bones from centre of fillets
2. Combine breadcrumbs, coconut and curry powder
3. Heat oil, fry fillets 2 mins on each side or until flesh flakes.



# Women set their course

A new course running at Newcastle Technical College, NSW, is teaching women the art and science of navigation, preparing them for several careers not usually followed by women. The Women in Navigation report on the 'Jolly Jill Tars of All Trades'.

NO LONGER does "Hello sailor" refer only to lusty tattooed seamen, readily identified in the past as the holders of nautical supremacy. Steadily becoming distinguished as a crew to be reckoned with are the 12 women of the new WIN (Women in Navigation) course setting sail each week from Newcastle Technical College.

The brainchild of Steve Howlett of Sydney Tech, the course was piloted in the Newcastle area due to its close marine affiliation and the possibility of future employment in the maritime and tourist industries for those who complete the course.

Already the course is causing widespread interest among prospective employers, government departments and private enterprise connected with the

boating and maritime industries.

There is an added bonus for future employers of WIN graduates as they will be taking on real "Jill Tars of All Trades", as the course covers many subjects suitable not only to the maritime industry but other outlets as well. Subjects studied include computing, office skills, shipbuilding, marine painting, meteorology, seaman(woman)-ship, welding, navigation, outboard motor maintenance, marine engineering, life skills and communications and first aid.

Work experience and industrial visits as well as practical sailing lessons have also been undertaken enthusiastically.

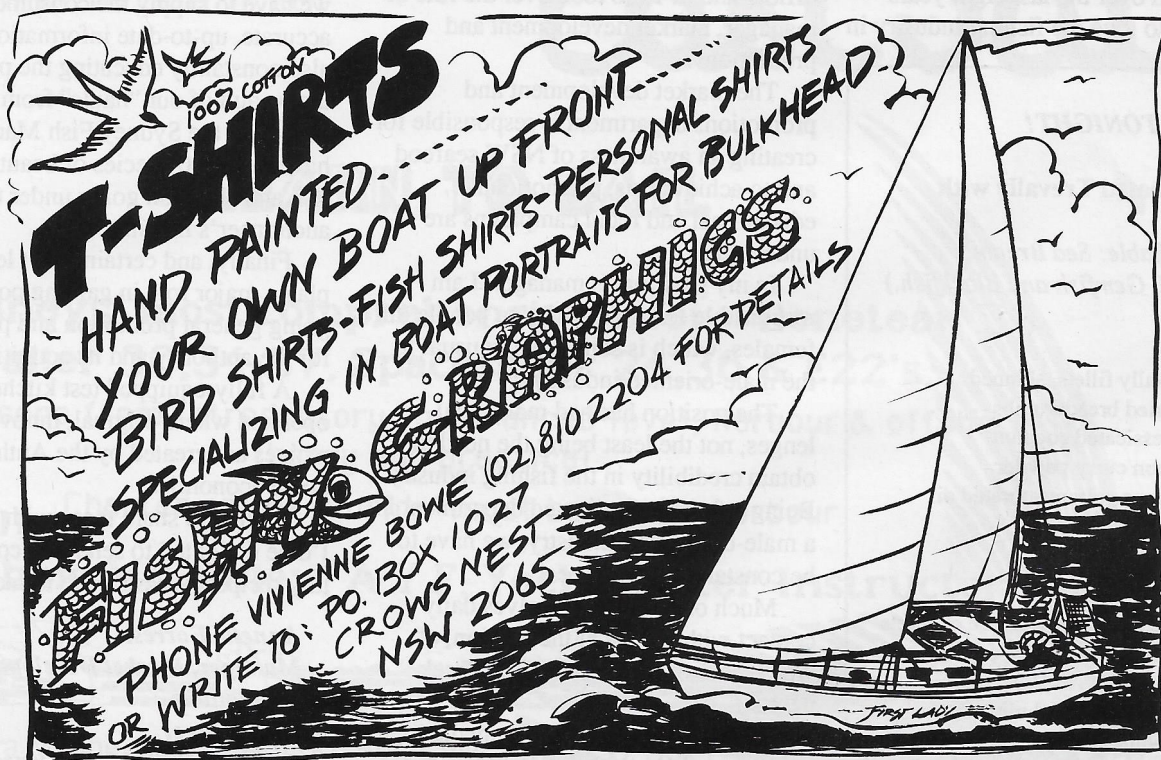
Those already engaged in the WIN course find it challenging, interesting and social as they attempt new skills and

step into waters they have never tried before. WIN students have also found they have adapted easily to the pleasures of the sport of sailing.

Already, interest in future courses is growing and the success of the 18-week course is assured if it continues on its present tack of fair weather and plain sailing.

Just as important as the practical and future employment prospects resulting from WIN is the network of easy-going shipmates, all having come aboard for a variety of reasons but all enjoying a love of boats.

*More information about WIN can be obtained from the Co-ordinator, Sandra Dann, at Newcastle Technical College on (049) 61 7323.*





# Fire on the sea shore

KERALA has a 590km-long coastline. About 800,000 fisherpeople live in the coastal areas. Of these, 179,000 are seagoing fishermen, 47,000 are inland fishermen and about 30,000 are fish vending women. The women of this community are generally more educated and aware than men, not only because of schooling but because of contact with people of other communities in the market and in the homes of their customers.

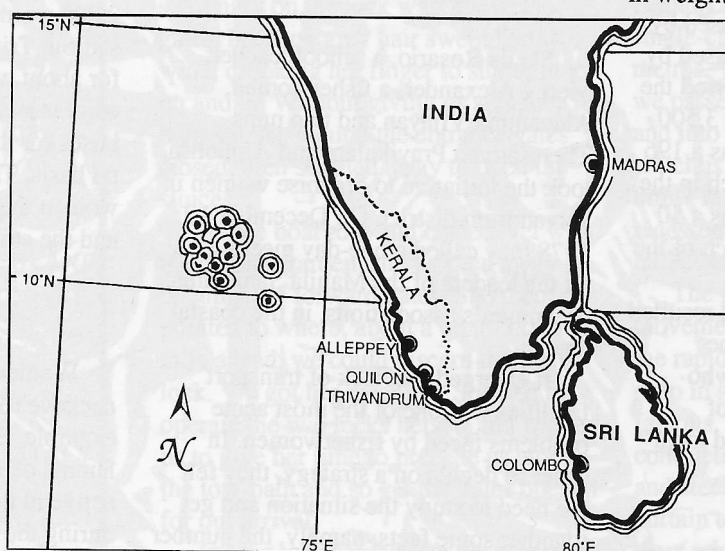
According to a 1981 survey, 92 per cent of fishing people live below the poverty line. Since their work is connected with the sea, they have to stay on the seashore. Many families live beyond the sea wall which is erected to protect the shore from erosion. During the monsoon, the houses are in danger of being washed into the sea.

During the season when the catch is good, the people eat a fairly balanced diet of tapioca, rice, fish and some vegetables. Men are always well fed because of the general belief that the work they do on the sea is the hardest work.

Environmental hygiene is very poor due to congested living conditions. Diseases like tuberculosis, asthma, diarrhoea, worm infestation and dysentery are very common. Since the women carry fish on their heads, they suffer from various maladies of the spine, and chest pain is frequent among them. Loans taken in times of sickness, to buy implements, or for family functions, have to be repaid at interest rates of 60 per cent to 120 per cent with the result that indebtedness is perennial.

In Trivandrum and Quilon, women are primarily engaged in fish selling. In other districts they are employed in netmaking and seasonal drying of fish. A number of women are employed in

**The struggles of the fisherwomen of Kerala, India, to obtain basic needs such as transport to their market have led to a grassroots reform movement.**  
**PATRICIA KURUVINA-KUNNEL reports.**



## The Kerala region of southern India

the coir (coconut fibre) industry.

With the introduction of trawling, women and children are employed in prawn (shrimp) peeling. This is a skilled job but is very lowly paid and no effort is made to maintain hygienic working conditions. The labourers are brought in by different contractors and are not unionised. Some contractors even take women from Kerala to Gujarat to work in the prawn peeling industry there.

## Development or destruction?

In 1952 an Indo-Norwegian project introduced mechanised fishing at Neendakarra in Quilon. At this time prawns had become very expensive in the USA and Japan. In order to catch prawns on a large scale, ground trawling

was introduced in Kerala.

A ground trawl net dragged by a powerful engine is used to scrape the seabed. This scraping process not only destroys vegetation on the seabed but also catches fish eggs and baby fish. Each trawler destroys an average of 25 kilos of baby fish in one operation, and 3,000 trawlers are in operation every day. The baby fish, if allowed to grow, would undergo a 100 per cent increase in weight.

The original ground trawl net made of steel rope was invented during World War I to detect underground mines. In the process the nets caught plenty of fish. After the war a net made of nylon thread began to be used to catch those species of fish which live on the seabed.

In the industry, ground trawling is termed a destructive fishing process. Therefore, when introduced in Norway in 1936, it was accompanied by certain government controls related to the number of nets to be

used, the size of the mesh and the distance up to which they could operate. But no such controls were imposed when trawling was introduced to Kerala. Immediate profit was the only guiding principle of the merchants and middlemen who owned the trawlers.

In 1975 purseiners were introduced. A purseiner is a net designed to catch the species of fish which live on the surface of the sea. The net covers almost one hectare. Its bottom is equipped with rings and weights and its top with floats. A boat with 100hp engine chases and encircles a shoal. The net closes around the shoal and not one fish escapes. This is known as overfishing because the whole shoal is caught without any

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# Fire on the sea shore

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consideration for the renewal of fish resources.

Purseining resulted in the extinction of white bait in Peru, after which the Peruvian government strictly regulated the amount of fish caught and the species caught. But the need for similar controls was ignored when purseiners were introduced in Kerala.

As a result of these developments, the total catch, both in the traditional and mechanical sector, went up to 450,000 tons in 1975. But by 1981 it had decreased to 270,000 tons. From 1969 to 1982, fishing implements increased by 14 per cent and fishermen increased by 26 per cent. During the same period the number of trawlers increased to 3,500 and purseiners to 100. There was a 196 per cent increase in the fish catch in the mechanised sector, but there was a 50 per cent decrease in the fish catch of the traditional sector.

Thus, modern developments resulted in the rich becoming richer at the expense of the poor fisherfolk who became poorer, and at the cost of destruction of fish resources and local ecology.

## Women's status

As a general practice, men give their earnings to women. Property, if any, is generally in the women's names. This may sound as if the women are free and independent. They do have some independence because they have control over money and also some freedom of movement.

But this situation also adds to their burden. The woman is wholly responsible for meeting all the family expenses. She has to borrow money and is solely responsible for paying back loans. She even has to give the man money for alcohol. If she refuses a big quarrel takes place. Alcoholism is prevalent among men and results in a lot of violence on women.

A woman's day starts very early. Men go to the sea at different times, depending on the season. The woman

has to prepare food for the man to take with him. Then she must rush to the store to buy fish to sell in the market.

Women walk an average of five to 10km a day, usually on an empty stomach. They come back around 6pm and then begin cooking, fetching water, cleaning and taking care of children. In spite of all this, women take an active part in all the struggles of the fisherpeople. They seek solace for their sufferings in pious practices and rituals, although they have no place in committees of the church, temple or mosque.

## Struggle for transport

Sheila Rosario, a school teacher, Mercy Alexander, a fisherwoman, Aleyamma Vijayan and two nuns, Theresamma Prayikalam and Alphonsa, took the initiative to organise women in Trivandrum district. On December 10, 1978 they called a one-day meeting of all the leaders of the Mahila Samajams, or women's associations, in the coastal areas.

It emerged that lack of transport facilities was one of the most acute problems faced by fisherwomen. In order to decide on a strategy, they felt the need to study the situation and get together some facts, namely, the number of women going to market with fish for sale, the number of markets, the distance to different markets and the main difficulties faced during selling.

On February 26, 1979 the leaders met to share their findings. The total number of fish selling women in Trivandrum district was 4,789. The women went to 127 different markets and the distance covered by them ranged from two to 17 kilometres. Normally, women were not allowed to travel in State transport buses with fish. Sometimes they were allowed to travel in private buses.

On March 16, 1979 the activists and leaders met and decided to form a union which would be affiliated with the Trivandrum District Fish Workers' Union.

After a series of zonal meetings and village meetings, 40 leaders met for a

three-day seminar. Street plays, songs and pictures were used to share experiences. An action council was formed which met on April 22. Based on the survey, demands were formulated for special buses for fish selling women, fish storage facilities, health facilities, housing facilities and monthly allowances for widows of fishermen.

On February 10, 1980 the action council handed a memorandum to the chief minister who promised to discuss the matter with the Fishermen's Welfare Corporation. On February 19 the women held a sit-in demonstration in front of the secretariat and on March 20 about 2,000 women picketed the central bus station, Trivandrum, paralysing traffic for about two hours. The same day, the chief minister promised three special buses for the women, on an experimental basis. This victory encouraged the women to press for their other demands, and the struggle continues.

## Women leaders

Women leaders have played a decisive role in many agitations. For example, Baby, Josephine and Kama-lamma of Pulluvila in Trivandrum were active in the fight for a ban on trawling during the monsoon. They entered the fisheries office and were arrested and taken to court. They refused to accept bail and were put in the central jail where they stayed for a few days. Public pressure mounted until the chief minister withdrew the case and the women were released.

In Alleppey on May 13, 1984 fishermen burned a trawling boat which violated the Fishing Regulation Act. Such violations occur frequently and government does not take any action. The police arrived and brutally beat up all the people who were watching the boat burn. Five men were arrested.

A woman named Kuttamma led 2,000 women and children to the police station. They refused to disperse until the arrested men were released, which the police finally did. Meanwhile,

Continued page 22



# NETWORK

## WISENET

THE Women in Science Enquiry Network has been established to increase women's participation in the sciences and to link people who are working towards a more participatory and socially useful science.

WISENET aims to gather and disseminate data on women in science, including the physical, social and life sciences, mathematics, computing, medicine, engineering and associated technologies. It also aims to explore the connection between the different disciplines and promote communication between scientists and the community on social and environmental issues.

WISENET is open to women and men who have an involvement or interest in the sciences and a commitment towards working for change in line with the objectives.

For further information contact *WISENET*, GPO Box 452, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia.



## THE WOMEN'S MARITIME ASSOCIATION

This is an informational and support network of seafaring women. Established in 1980, WMA is based in Seattle, Washington, USA, with members from all over the United States.

Membership includes women who work on ferries, tugs, fishing boats, processors, research vessels, tankers, deepsea merchant ships, yachts and delivery vessels, as well as women who are seeking employment in the maritime and fishing industries, or who are students in maritime training programs.

WMA's purpose is to promote a sense of communication among women who formerly felt isolated in their non-traditional jobs, to exchange health, safety, training and employment information and to seek solutions to discrimination and sexual harassment. A monthly newsletter and membership directory enable us to keep in touch with each other. Programs and informal

If you want to be included in the NETWORK section, send your information to **NETWORK**, *Sistership*, PO Box 1027, Crows Nest, NSW 2065, Australia.

meetings are held in Seattle.

For further information write to:  
*Women's Maritime Association*, 507 Third Avenue #743, Seattle, Washington, 98104-2355, USA.



**Dolphin Encounter Network**  
P.O.Box 37, Corindi Beach, NSW 2456, Australia.



**Marine Education Society of Australasia**  
The Secretary, Julie Swartz, Marine Studies Centre, Weeroona Parade, Queenscliff, Victoria 3225, Australia.



**Australian Association for Maritime History**  
Newsletter Editor, Vaughan Evans, 85 Fullers Rd, Chatswood, NSW 2067.



**DOLPHIN DATA BASE**  
The Dolphin Data Base is a non-profit, voluntary organisation which aims to assist people in connecting with others involved with marine mammals, marine and environmental issues and peaceful co-existence with our own and other species. People listed in the DDB are involved in a variety of projects ranging from scientific research to swimming with wild dolphins. Contact us if you want to be included in forthcoming volumes of the Dolphin Data Base. Volume 2 is available for \$US5 (\$US7 for outside US and Canada) and Volumes 1 & 2 are available for \$US7 (\$US10 for outside US and Canada). *Dolphin Data Base*, P.O. Box 5657,

Playa Del Rey, CA 90293-5657, USA, 213-301-1535.



To sponsor Kay Cottee's solo circumnavigation on Blackmore's First Lady, and thereby assist the Life Education Program, send donations to:

*The First Lady Life Education Trust*  
P.O. Box 66, Potts Point, NSW 2011, Australia. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.



**The Women's Committee of the Yachting Association of NSW** holds regular meetings and organises dinners to promote women's sailing events in the State. They can be contacted at: *Sports House*, 157 Gloucester St, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia.



**Maritime Economic History Group**, Institute of Economic History, Norwegian School of Economics, Helleveien 30, N-5035 Bergen-Sandviken, Norway. Contact: Lewis R. Fischer and Helge W. Nordvik.

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**THE MAGAZINE  
FOR WOMEN ON  
THE WATER**

**See inside back cover**



## Wild Women on board

### From page 14

building gym where we utilise unused equipment from the Yamba RSL Club.

Wild Women also hold pottery workshops in a studio of the Shire's Art and Crafts building. Local people are very happy with all the new activity we're generating. Local mums are especially excited about our "Dolphins" alternative school, co-ordinated by a qualified teacher.

In the school, ocean awareness and surfing are taught as part of the creative curriculum. We hope to combine the school with an environmental resources and craft education centre for the whole community.

The collective is looking forward to establishing a retail shop, too, that sells handmade and grown goods of the children and parents. This way we can introduce the children and adults to practical business skills such as accounting, pricing and banking. It will all be a natural learning extension of the children's other activities.

And there are other projects, too: a

silkscreen printing studio and extending the use of video and photography to create images of women surfing. Plus we're involved in teaching more women how to use tools and equipment relevant to the surfboard industry. That includes exchanging ideas and knowledge of engineering and design, as well as taking a critical look at how equipment supposedly designed for both men and women usually benefits men only. So many things that women use in their daily life or at the workplace are too heavy to lift, too high, need a stronger hand to turn, or don't consider the fact that we have breasts, carry children and are more susceptible to lower back pain and repetitive strain injury. All of these collective learning skills go toward empowering women.

**DEBORAH:** And is there still more to come?

**COUGAR:** Yes, we want a legal formation of a workers' co-operative, we want to develop snow-surfing equipment and hopefully Wild Women will feature at the Brisbane World Expo this year.

We want to keep creating jobs that fit

people, not people fit jobs. We want the potential and scope of every woman involved in Wild Women industry and all of its community offshoots to be realised. We want to keep creating new products and new presentations while also creating new working ethics. We want to keep in check our ego and power because it's too easy to get carried away by taking shortcuts and leaving women behind. And we want that our feelings and personal growth are never secondary to the products, the sales or the projects.

Wild Women have great dreams and we're demonstrating that women have great abilities. With a sense of humour, determination and a fundamental belief in women's infinite capacity, we can keep designing together for a more spiritual, creative and appropriate industrial society.

---

*This interview was reproduced with kind permission from DAWN for a Universal Society, No 6, 1987. (P O Box 61, Enmore NSW 2042).*

## pirate women

### From page 4

shipmates. They had to persist with their claim in court that they were pregnant until a surgeon eventually examined them and acknowledged it. Neither of them hanged, but Mary died of fever in prison soon after the trial.

Rackam was allowed audience with Anne the day he was to be hanged. She was less than pleased to see him. Obviously feeling betrayed, she is quoted as saying that she "was sorry to see him there, but if he had fought like a man, he need not have been hanged like a dog." Anne stayed in prison till she bore the child, and although she was never executed her subsequent fate was unknown.

There were more women on the high seas than are satisfactorily documented. What seems to me remarkable is that these two women were on board the same vessel. There are other stories of

women at sea during this period so it is possible that they were looking out for Sisters.

Historian George Woodbury says, "It is not at all clear just how these enterprising females managed to conceal their sex in the exclusive and close company of men. Intimate details of conduct and behaviour are never fully explained, nor is it within the scope of the present writing to try and explain all the modus operandi of such disguise. However, the fact remains that women were able to manage somehow and that is all that is of immediate concern. It is an incontrovertible fact that women — perfectly normal women by all usual standards — have passed as men and have led masculine careers for long periods of time, under a great variety of circumstances, and have escaped detection."

Mary and Anne's stories are consid-

ered well-documented accounts of women at sea. They lack a lot of information. How did they disguise themselves? Why did they live as men? What were their thoughts? How many women were there who "escaped detection"? There are so many unanswered questions. Let's try to reconstruct their stories.

### Bibliography

Gosse, Philip: *The History of Piracy*, London, Cassell and Co Ltd, 1954.  
 Johnson, Captain Charles: *A History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1926.  
 Woodbury, George: *Great Days of Piracy*, London, Elek, 1954.



# BOSUN'S LOCKER

From page 11

## ⚓ VIDEOS

⚓ **Caribbean Centre for Interdisciplinary Research** : a half-hour program showing an eight-day pilot study conducted by Dr Betsy Smith on autism therapy, much of it consisting of interaction with dolphins. *Pequod Inc., Box 54, Homestead, FL 33090-0054, USA.*

⚓ **Point of View Productions : Water Baby — Experiences of Water Birth**, a one-hour in-depth documentary that provides comprehensive information on the use of water for labour, birth and early childhood. Produced by Karyl Daniels and available for sale or rental. *24777 Folsom St, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA.*

⚓ **Preservation of the Amazon River Dolphin** : a half-hour documentary by Roxanne Kremer on the dolphins of the Amazon basin; emphasising preservation of the rainforest, and the dolphins and people who inhabit it. *3302 N. Burton Ave, Rosemead, CA 91770, USA.*

## ⚓ CLASSIFIED ADS

Floor space for rent - Are you making your own sails or awnings? Floor space is available in Sydney suitable for lofting (sails for a 42ft sloop were recently lofted and cut here). The space is available for short term rentals. Call Judy on (02) 516 2487.

⚓ Advertisement from the Illustrated London News, 1883: "There was only one person saved from the wreck and she, with the cleverness of her sex, had taken a piece of TERE-BINE SOAP, and washed herself ashore."

⚓ Charterers, crew and schools: are there any women interested in women-only sailing adventures? Day, weekend or week long? *Sistership* is also keen to identify women who want to learn to sail. We'd like to access any charter companies and sailing schools offering these services.

*Sistership* will set up a contact service for women worldwide who would like to get together on the water. This list could include professional crew, as well as recreational boaters.

In Sydney, for example, Ruth would like to organise regular events — sailing or simply meeting.

Contact *Sistership*, PO Box 1027, Crows Nest, NSW 2065, or phone Ruth (046) 26 6740.

⚓ Keep your hats on! REMEMBER: skin cancer is a risk we should all beware of. Don't forget to cover up.

⚓ International Women's Day will have come and gone by the time you read this. If you haven't considered them already, spare a thought for women the world over.

## ⚓ WIND AND SEA — by Kay Gardner

A soft wind blows in from the sea  
Whispering its sweet message to me,  
And I know where it comes from  
And I know where its been.  
I don't know where its going  
But I know I'm like the wind.

The gentle ebb and flow of the sea . . .  
Yes, the sea is a woman and she's talking to me.  
And I know where she comes from  
And I know where she's been.  
I don't know where she's going,  
But I know that she's my friend.

Unlike, the wind and sea,  
Yet both know what it is to be free.  
Both can tell what it is to be free.  
And we know where we come from,  
And we know where we've been.  
We don't know where we're going  
But we hear the sea and wind.

And we know where we come from,  
And we know where we've been.  
We don't know where we're going,  
But we know we'll go as friends.

These lyrics come from the album *Fishersdaughter* by Kay Gardner. Primarily vocal, it has a distinctly traditional sound. The *Earth* side is rich with ballads, wisdom and female affirmation. The *Sea* side is full of New England sea shanties. Musicians include Kay on dulcimer, flutes and vocals, April Rain and Alix Dobkin on guitar. It is available through *LADYSLIPPER Inc., P.O. Box 3124, Durham, North Carolina, 27705, USA.* Also available from the *Feminist Bookshop, Balmain Rd, Lilyfield 2040, NSW.*





*Wavelength continued***From page 2**

When I got back to Australia I bought a Cutlass 24ft (spruce, strip planked, built by Ken Beashel in about 1962). It is this boat which I sail in Peace Squadron actions and which I am fitting out to take to Moruroa this year.

At this stage there are five yachts voyaging to Moruroa to protest France's continuing nuclear presence in the Pacific region. We plan to leave Australia in May this year and hope to have even more yachts join the main fleet.

Our preferred option for an action at this stage is a peaceful vigil in August just outside the territorial waters of Moruroa. Final details will be worked out by the crews of the boats involved.

We would particularly like to contact people in and around the areas we are intending to visit on the journey. These include, in order of visit, New Zealand (Aotearoa), French Polynesia (Society Islands and the Tuomotu Archipelago — unlikely to be permitted by French authorities), Cook Islands, Tonga, Western and American Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and New Caledonia (Kanaky). It is unlikely that we will get all boats to all places, but by

scattering, perhaps we can get to most.

We will need to be back in Australia before the cyclone season starts in November and it is for this reason that we will not be able to include Micronesia and Papua New Guinea in the itinerary.

We plan this protest to keep public attention on the nuclearisation of the Pacific region.

We would be grateful for any support — financial, publicity or moral — you can give us.

Yours in solidarity,

Elizabeth Morley

Pacific Peace Fleet, Sydney.

Last year I interviewed quite a lot of the women taking part in the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers. Out of the 204 boats that took part in this, the largest trans-ocean race (from Canary Islands to Barbados), there were very few boats that did not have women aboard.

I am very pleased to see this large increase in the number of women who take a full part in sailing, but I am not sure I am with you on the idea of a separate magazine just for women. What

I would like to see more of is women playing their normal part in sea life and for the yachting magazines to feature women or men for what they achieve regardless of their sex. For this reason I would like to see more mixed crews as on the cover of the November '87 issue of *Yachting World*.

As a mother who sailed around the world with her family I know how much the success of our voyage was the partnership between me and my husband. So many of the successful cruising couples are also successful partnerships and one cannot separate one from the other.

I have two books published: *Cruising With Children*, 1986, a handbook for parents sailing with children and particularly concerned with educating children afloat; and *Pacific Odyssey*, 1985, an account of my three-year voyage across the Pacific. Both books are published by Adlard Coles, London.

Best wishes for your venture,

Gwenda Cornell  
London.

Continued page 23

## Fire on the sea shore

**From page 18**

Kuttamma was in agony. Her body was severely bruised from the police beatings. Once the men were released she and 21 others who had been injured went to the government hospital for treatment.

**Martyrs' flame**

A landmark in the struggle was the lighting of the martyrs' flame. On April 23, 1985 four fishermen were killed during illegal night trawling in Alleppey.

The union decided to carry a martyrs' flame along the coast of Kerala up to the capital, as a protest against the government's apathy. On June 30 the widows of the deceased lit the flame in Kattoor. Thousands of watching

fisherfolk wept as the women sang:

*You who rule us, listen.*

*Do you know of a place called Kattoor?*

*Do you know us, who hold this flame?*

*Have you forgotten Babu, whom you killed years ago?*

*Do you remember the four lives you have now taken?*

*They are our brothers who went to sea*

*To sustain these widows and their children.*

*Do you have any humanity?*

*Is there any rule of law in this land?*

*Is there any law to protect the poor?*

*If we have any human spirit in us*

*We will rise up to fight for our rights.*

*Remember, struggles continue all over the country.*

*Remember we are changing our strategy.*

*Success is our goal, success is our goal.*

*The hunger and thirst of the sea's children*

*Burns like a fire along the seashore.*

*This flame rises from that fire on the seashore.*

*You ministers, you rulers of this land,*

*Open your eyes,*

*Before this great fire burns you up.*

From *Manushi* — a journal about women and society, No. 37, 1987. C1/202 Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi-24, India. Annual subscription: \$US17 or equivalent in the name of Manushi Trust, by personal cheque, covers six issues by airmail.



*Wavelength continued***From page 22**

I am Chief Purser on board the passenger vessel, Abel Tasman, which is owned and operated by the TT (Transport Tasmania) Line and runs from Devonport, Tasmania to Melbourne, Victoria.

We have 115 crew members on board and at any one time there are only about six women on board. There are usually two female Pursers, two Nurse/Stewards and one or two Stewards and all are interested in your magazine.

We wish you every success in this venture.

Yours faithfully,  
Debbie Appeldorff  
Devonport, Tasmania.

To my knowledge, the ACTA (Associated Container Transportation Australia) group does not have women officers or crew on any of its container ships which operate between Australia, UK/Europe, the US, Pacific and Middle East.

There certainly are many women working in administrative capacities — clerical staff in the operational divisions, personnel, secretarial, public relations and even business development.

We would all be interested to see the magazine's first issue and wish you luck with such a commendable venture.

Yours sincerely,  
Tina L. Broad  
Sydney.

I would like to wish you well with your new publication.

The Newsletter of the Maritime Economic History Group, of which I am co-editor, contains information about several conferences.

The Tenth International Congress of Economic History to be held in Louvain, Belgium, 19-24 August 1990, will contain a session of the MEHG entitled "Shipping and Trade, 1750-1955". We are calling for papers by February 1, 1988.

I might also call your attention to the First International Congress of Maritime History, to be held in Liverpool, England in the summer of 1992. This

will be hosted jointly by the University of Liverpool and the Merseyside Maritime Museum. We are quite interested in having one or more sessions concerning maritime women at that congress. We will most likely be issuing a formal call for papers for this conference in September 1988.

As it happens, my wife, Ann-Devlin Fischer, is currently completing a thesis at the University of Bergen on "Working Women in the Canadian, British and Norwegian Merchant Marines, 1863-1914." This is a study of women who were actually employed on board ocean-going vessels in the half century prior to the outbreak of World War I. It is based largely on quantitative rather than qualitative sources; her interest is largely in discovering how many women (and from what backgrounds) actually worked at sea. The thesis demonstrates that women did in fact serve in a variety of paid positions on board late 19th-century bluewater vessels, in spite of discrimination and superstition (e.g., that women were "bad luck").

We have put together two brief bibliographies which may be useful for your more comprehensive work. The first is a selected bibliography of women at sea in the 19th century. The other is a list of books and articles about maritime women taken from the Canadian Maritime Bibliography for 1986, compiled by myself and M. Stephen Salmon.

Again, I would like to wish you and *Sistership* the best of luck.

Best regards,  
Lewis R. Fischer  
Bergen-Sandviken, Norway.

There was a time when a woman aboard was regarded as an evil omen, and many a tale among seafarers will attest to the truth of this superstition. Yet, at the same time, women avenged their gender as pirate captains: Anne Bonny and Mary Reed (*Outlaws of the Ocean*, p.298).

We have come a long way since then. Women, even in their teens, solo the world in small craft. Women serve as

captains of ocean-going commercial vessels, and other women join their husband ship officers on banana boats and supertankers, permanently, port to port, on globe-spanning voyages. Yet other women serve as officers and crew on naval vessels and maritime police vessels, in the service of an ever growing number of countries. Indeed, women are at sea, and the best example thereof occurred when the British entry to the 200th Independence Anniversary of the USA passed by our house in NY Harbor, the Sir Winston Churchill, with an all-woman crew.

You have embarked on an ambitious project, yet one worthwhile pursuing. By now there must be thousands of women at sea, somewhere on the oceans — and rivers — of the world. I sincerely hope you will be able to reach them all, and to communicate with them on the two elements common to them: the sea and their femininity. That can be accomplished only if your vehicle of communication will remain free from ideological considerations, and devote itself to what unites us.

I am not only a criminologist, with a special interest in the role women play as perpetrators, participants and victims of crime (*Sisters in Crime*), but also a researcher in maritime criminology (*Outlaws of the Ocean*, co-authored with my husband, G.O.W. Mueller). Above all I am a sailor with a fancy to take our ship up the Atlantic coast to Maine or down to the Bahamas, with the sailor's delight to discover new ports, and the criminologist's penchant for discovering what's going on on the oceans, legal or illegal.

At some time in the future I shall be happy to contribute a more scholarly article on "Women at Sea".

With all good wishes,  
Dr Freda Adler  
Newark, New Jersey.

Congratulations! I am delighted to see there are other women out there interested in sailing. I see the newsletter to be

Continued page 24



## COMPETITION — Win a Sistership T-shirt!

Sistership is running a competition, and acknowledging a great woman:

Our thoughts and best wishes go to Kay Cottee, a Sydney sailor, who is attempting the first *non-stop* solo circumnavigation of the world by a woman. She is aboard Blackmore's First Lady, a Cavalier 37 which she built herself from bare hull.

As Sistership goes to press, she is in the South Atlantic Ocean, not far from the Equator. She is about halfway around the globe, after rounding Cape Horn safely.

Kay is seeking support for the Life Education Program, which has been set up to fight youth drug addiction. (Please see *Network*, page 19).

While Kay's voyage is intended to break one record, there were other women who have made the voyage around the globe. Can you list the female solo circumnavigators? Sistership will send T-shirts to three people who supply the most names (and sources, if possible). Certainly supply any information you may deem beneficial to Sistership. Send your T-shirt size, too!

There will be a profile on Kay Cottee and, we hope, an interview with her conducted over radio telephone in the next issue of Sistership.

### Wavelength continued

#### From page 23

a great way of having contact with like-minded adventurers.

What I would like to see is a list of alternative words that presented a non-sexist view of sailing. I am heartily sick of "six-man liferafts" and "helmsman". Boats are "she", sailors "he". I feel left out, underrated and occasionally insulted. Any ideas on how we can overcome such a sexist bias within the sailing vocabulary?

Good luck with your venture.

All the best,  
Susan Abbott

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory.

Sistership sounds brilliant!

Best wishes for her success and for all who sail in her!

In sisterhood,  
Katharine Jeffery  
Bath, England.

Women at the Australian Maritime College are few and far between: we represent less than one per cent of the student population and there is not a single female lecturer employed by the institution. Any encouragement that does take place is the effort of a few people and is largely swamped by a far more negative response to women.

Your idea of Sistership is great. As a woman who studies at a maritime college and who owns and sails a 32ft gaff rigged cutter, the sharing of ideas, experiences and dreams of other women

who likewise love the sea is always exciting.

I'm temporarily employed as a research assistant in the model towing tank at the AMC and I'm in the early stages of carrying out simulated sea trials on a one metre replica of my boat. Perhaps some of this project would make interesting reading, or perhaps I could get up the courage to tell some cruising tales.

For the time being I would simply like to support the magazine, and wish you well in getting Sistership launched.

Yours faithfully,  
Lisa Hick  
Deviot, Tasmania.

*Patsy Adam-Smith, OBE, author and the first Australian woman articulated on a coastal trading vessel, wrote to wish us luck. Ms Adam-Smith wrote There Was A Ship (the new edition with additional illustrations was published by Thomas Nelson in 1983) about her experiences on board the trader, which served the Furneaux Group of islands in the Bass Strait. Ms Adam-Smith was radio officer on board the Naracoopa. Her delightful book introduces us to the world of the coasters in the 50s, describing the hard life of those people, and says, "It took the little wooden ships to make a real woman out of me."*

## On the horizon

### In Sistership's next issue:

⚓ Granuaile O'Malley — An Irish Pirate and Pilot. Anne Chambers has written a fascinating book about this woman.

⚓ Cruising the Grenadines — Liz Leonard's account of a voyage in the Windward Islands.

⚓ Kay Cottee — sailing solo around the world.

⚓ Teaching in the fishing industry — Joan Alexander works for the NSW Fishing Industry Training Committee.

⚓ Wavelength — letters to Sistership — and more.

### DEADLINES for advertising and editorial copy:

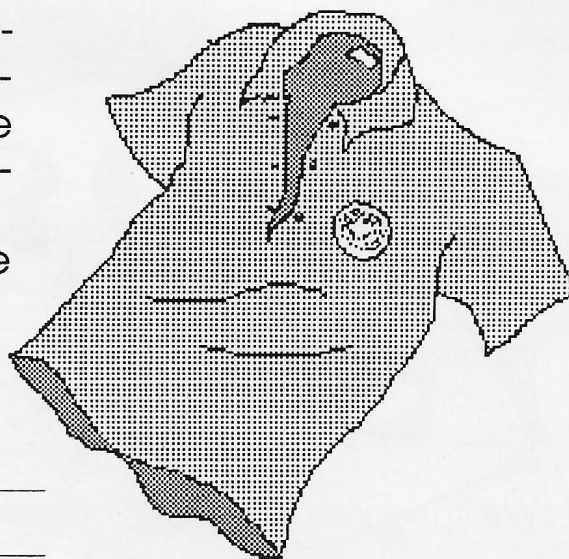
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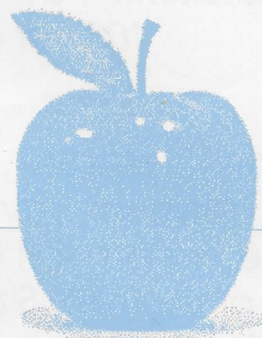
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CIDER PRESS offers congratulations to Ruth Boydell and all her contributors on the inaugural issue of Sistership, and wishes her and her magazine the best of luck, and many more issues to come.





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