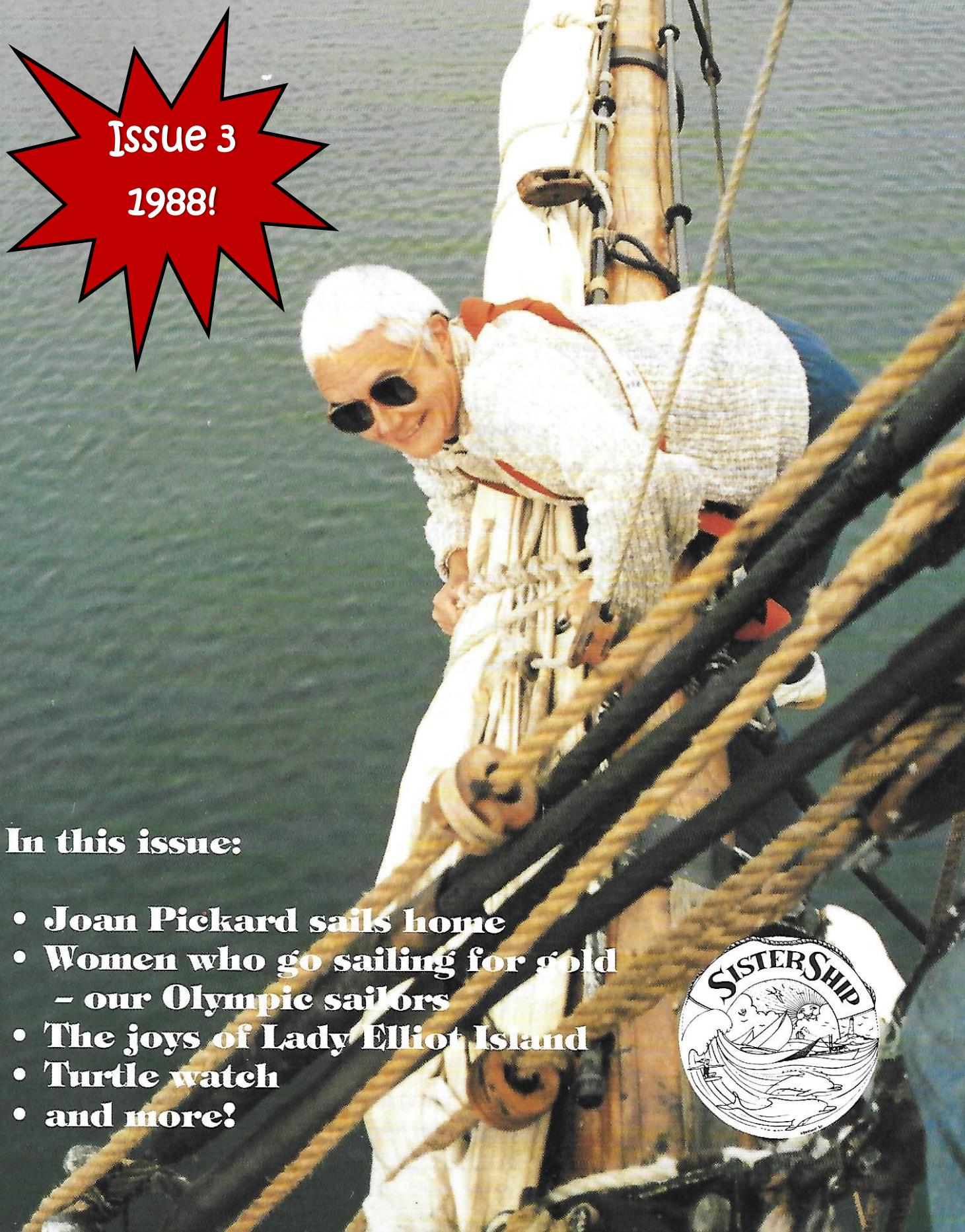


# SISTERSHIP

No. 3. September 1988. \$A4.50

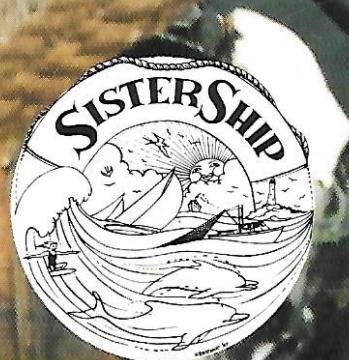
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Issue 3  
1988!



## In this issue:

- **Joan Pickard sails home**
- **Women who go sailing for gold**  
- our Olympic sailors
- **The joys of Lady Elliot Island**
- **Turtle watch**
- **and more!**



## SUBSCRIPTIONS, EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

### Sistership

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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-spaced typescript, using one side of the sheet only; or IBM/Compatible 5 1/4" floppy disk; or Macintosh disk (Microsoft Word, Works, MacWrite are acceptable). Please do **not** send one-off 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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A 10 per cent discount applies for three or more insertions of the same advertisement in consecutive issues.

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

Cover photograph shows Joan Pickard furling a sail on the yardarm of One and All

NUMBER three and still gliding along. We're shaking out the wrinkles and getting into cruising mode. However, we still need a good, strong and energetic crew to continue this passage. So keep sending the signal that Sistership is on the lookout for contributors, subscribers, and advertisers.

This issue includes a wonderful saga (and imaginative sketches) by Joan Pickard on her experiences on board the South Australian vessel, One and All, during the Australian First Fleet Re-enactment.

Two hundred years ago the Australian continent was settled by Europeans. Many Australians are celebrating this, although there are some who consider the event to be unworthy of such a celebration — a sticker reads: "40,000 years is NOT a bicentenary".

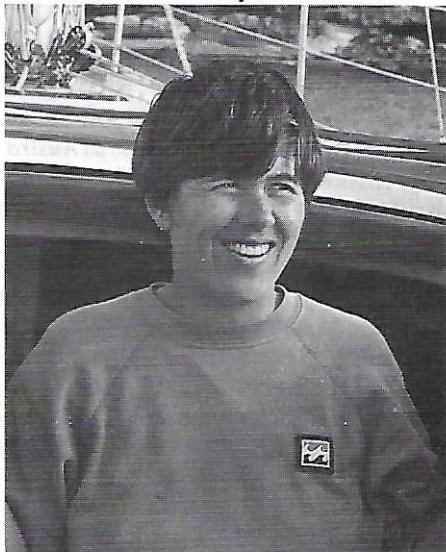
While many countries celebrate their national day as a symbol of freedom and independence, Australia's national day — January 26th — celebrates the invasion of a land already inhabited by Aboriginal people for the establishment of a penal colony.

However, these thoughts of mine on the politics of Australia's "Bicentenary" do not detract in any way from the feats of seamanship which have been demon-

strated by the various craft and their valiant crews who have sailed to Australia and in its waters, this and other years.

It is interesting to find that the number of

Picture by MAILIN SUCHTING



Ruth Boydell

women in these latest crews has been high. Somehow women from all over the world have found the wherewithal to get themselves a berth. Some have been sent as representatives of various community organisations. Some saved their own pen-

nies to pay for their berth. Some have been taken on as unpaid crew and others have earned their passage and pay. Their tales are many and varied.

The stories that emerge suggest the enormous value of such sailmeets. Friendships made, struggles for understanding, physical hardships are all aspects of any adventurous undertaking. The physical and spiritual journeys that are jointly undertaken at sea are inestimable.

Not only are the passages themselves uplifting, but the arrival in ports, the acceptance of people and the prospect of further voyages are inspiring and exciting.



We also have a story about a turtle watch program, one of many such events now being carried out around the world. As we realise the importance of our total environment, different groups and individuals are establishing research and monitoring projects on the co-inhabitants of our planet.

We must protect our heritage — people and cultures, as well as ecosystems and environment — with vigour.

## Ship's stores

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

I AM currently in England pursuing a gypsy sailor's lifestyle – living as cheaply as I can and sailing as much as possible – and hopefully getting paid to do it. I just sailed in the Round the Isle of Wight Race. There were 1,562 yachts entered in 43 classes which made for a spectacular sight – especially when they all raised spinakers! It must be the biggest yacht race in the world. Cowes Week is the next big event coming up. The big item of interest here in Hamble is the first all-female attempt at the Whitbread Round the World Race, starting from Portsmouth in September, 1989. A woman called Tracy Edwards, who raced in the last Whitbread aboard the eventual winner, Atlantic Privateer, is the inspiration behind it all. She has got a top crew together to race their Bruce Farr-designed 60ft maxi, Maiden Great Britain, in style around the world. The yacht is due to be launched by the Duchess of York on September 20th, 1988. Then the intensive training really starts. No doubt the progress of Maiden Great Britain will be closely followed by the world press and enthusiastically applauded by women sailors everywhere.

**Sue Bowly**  
Hamble, Hampshire, UK

I am sitting at my public service desk, on the 10th floor, looking out over Darling Harbour, and longing to be out on our newly acquired ferrocement ketch, Phoebe. My new career in journalism is great, but nothing can match the feeling of sitting on the deck, sanding bits of wood and planning adventures. Phoebe was purchased with rusted mast steps, corroded rudder, missing compass and steering wheel and most of the interior fittings removed and put in storage. But, she did have four double cabins, radar and autopilot, and for \$13,500 for a 50ft yacht, we couldn't go wrong! I hope! There's a hell of a lot of work to do – hull painting, re-rigging and new aluminium masts, but what a project! I was interested to read Gill Bruce's letter in *Sistership* (No. 2) – sounds like they have a similar project at hand.

**Abbie Thomas**  
Sydney, NSW, Aust.

Thanks for the first copy of *Sistership*. I loved the design – it is similar to one I have

been working on for a stained glass window. Trying to keep my yacht on an aged pension is almost beyond me. I fear I shall have to sell her after my next New Zealand visit – my 11th and 12th solo cross-Tasman. I still want to round the Horn but perhaps a Stella Folkboat is not the boat.

**Ann Gash**

Nimbin, NSW, Aust.

*(Ann Gash, herself a world solo circumnavigator, was known in the 70s as Australia's "sailing Grandmother". She has written a book about her voyage, A Star To Steer Her By. – Editor)*

Our family has a Duncanson 29 sailing boat that provides the basis for some great moments and even greater arguments. We appear to be a normal sailing family with two kids and one on the way. Jenny, my wife, likes sailing but gets frightened. This in turn makes the kids nervous and eventually I get cranky because I expect women to be equal and not to get frightened so easily. Now I get frightened and I know other men get frightened but that is no excuse for irrational fear that women with kids seem to suffer. I have noticed other mothers carry on in a silly way as soon as the wind freshens. Now these women are not stupid or silly and after talking to them about their behaviour one gets a common theme in their answers, "I did this and that before I was married but since I've had the kids . . . well, I don't know, I just get frightened."

With the above in mind, it would be great if you could do a series of articles on why some women behave in this way once they have kids.

**John Ayliffe**  
Kangaroo Island, South Australia.

A particular area of concern to me lies in the problems encountered by women crewing on yachts – from the blatant sexism of many skippers and male crew, through to attitudes to female crew with children (my particular problem). I must add that my disabled son and I have sailed some 6,500 nautical miles in the Indian and Southern Oceans. It wasn't easy finding a boat that would take us, and still isn't, in spite of my navigational and carpentry skills. Let me know if you're interested in an article on this issue. *Sistership* is such a good idea – it must only go from strength to strength.

**Fiona McCormick**  
Armidale, NSW, Aust.

I've really enjoyed *Sistership*. I'm impressed with the enormous amount of research gone into it. I like the diversity, too.

Thanks for the coverage of Wild Women Surfboards (*Sistership* No. 1) . . . should reach a new audience.

I have been extraordinarily busy. Am in negotiations to send my wetsuits and fashion line to Expo in Brisbane during August. I'm developing a jacket that's a cross between a wetsuit and a sailing wet weather jacket as well.

My Wild Women line of clothing and wetsuits will be designed for a woman's body which – like most women's bodies! – is not size 12 all over, but larger in the hips than breasts. So, my "size 12" would be more like "top size 12, bottom size 14", and so on through all sizes. Other considerations are that women involved in sport often have broader backs and more developed biceps and thighs than non-sporting women.

**Cougar Wicce–Otter**  
Angourie, NSW, Aust.

Many thanks for forwarding my copy of *Sistership*. What pleasure I had in reading through it! I'm looking forward to all other issues.

My sincere good wishes go to all connected with the production for the successful future of this very much needed publication.

**Joyce Johnston**  
Malabar, NSW, Aust.

I take great pleasure in sending you some information on Kvindeligt Marinecorps (KMK), the Danish Women's Naval Corps.

KMK saw the light of day in June 1946 and has since 1961 been an integrated part of the Danish Home Guard.

Members of the KMK serve on a voluntary basis and receive no pay. They are trained in their spare time, i.e. evenings, weekends and holidays.

At present KMK has eight full-time, permanently appointed and long-term female officers, holding the ranks from Lieutenant to Commander Senior Grade.

Depending on the need for and qualifications of the voluntary personnel, they may attend courses for subsequent promotion to non-commissioned officers and later officers up to the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

In accordance with present regulations the members of KMK are not designated to

*Continued page 22*

# Women who go sailing for gold



*This year sees the first sailing event at the Olympic Games which is specifically for women. Such an event will certainly make the Games potentially accessible to a larger number of yachtswomen. However, not only the racing elite will benefit from this regatta: public awareness of women's contribution to yachting can only enhance the image of women in sport generally. RUTH BOYDELL reports.*

THE sailing events of the Games of the 24th Olympiad will begin on September 20 and continue for at least seven days; reserved days acknowledge the vagaries of the weather. They will be sailed at Pusan, on the southeast coast of South Korea.

The classes of boats which will be sailed are 470 (Men), 470 (Women), Finn, Flying Dutchman, Star, Tornado and Soling. This year there are a number of inaugural events at the Games. Among these is the women's 470 Class sailing regatta.

It is the first time a separate women's sailing event has been included on the Olympic agenda. Since the inception of 470 class Olympic regattas only one female skipper has yet competed. Cathy Foster, a British contender, sailed in the 1984 Games. With male crew, she steered their boat to a commendable 10th place.

Competition this year will surely come from the United States teams, who have had several strong crews vying for selection.

Marit Soderstrom of Sweden is also a keen contender. Soderstrom won the Women's 470 Worlds in Israel in March this year.

"You can't leave out the French, Dutch and Italians – it's going to be pretty interesting because there is a very good depth of talent at the top of the fleet, with at least five or six who could be in it," said Nicola Green, the Australian skipper for the event.

Nicola Green and crew Karyn Davis will be the first women ever to represent Australia in sailing at the Olympic Games.

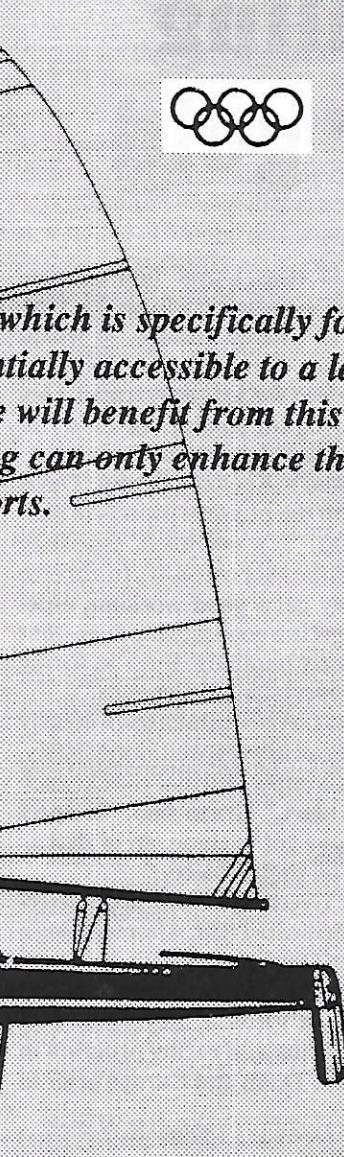
Green, 33, is one of Australia's most successful yachtswomen, having won Australian titles in the Cherub and Tasar titles along with a Cherub World title. She has also won four Australian Women's titles

and has competed three times in the World Women's Championships.

Green has raced 470s for close to a decade, accumulating a great deal of experience in the class prior to its introduction as an Olympic class this year.

Green's family have been involved in Olympic yachting for many years. Her father, Frank Bethwaite, served as the Australian yachting team's meteorologist and brother, Mark Bethwaite, skippered Flying Dutchmans in the 1972 and 1976 Games.

Green has a pragmatic attitude towards the Games: "Because Mark has been there and done it, it has always seemed to me to be something within reach," she says. "Both Dad and Mark have been tremendously helpful in terms of advice and attitudes."



The Olympic 470 Class

Green went to the 1976 Games with her family and this has provided her with some appreciation of the conditions.

"It's only recently that I've realised the value of having attended that event. There were guns everywhere, the security was intense. I know what to expect this September," she said.

Karyn Davis, 27, is strong, agile and fit. She too has sailed since childhood, but has become involved in high-level competition only in the last few years.

She has previously crewed successfully in a wide range of classes, including one season as mainsheet hand in the demand-Continued page 4

Thanks go to Vanessa Dudley of the Australian Yachting Federation for provision of material for this report.

# Sailing for gold

From page 3

ing 18ft Skiff class. Davis' first international racing experience was in the 1985 Tasar World Championships, in which she and skipper Andrew York came fourth.

Davis crewed for longtime friend Alex Murray during the summer of 1986/7 in Perth. They placed second in the International Women's Keelboat Series. Davis comments on the physical aspects of sailing the 470s: "It's not hard, especially compared to the 18 (Foot Skiff). In a breeze you certainly get a good workout, especially if you get in a good tacking duel—that gets your heart pumping. But I'm strong enough for everything it demands."

Green and Davis became a team in early 1987, and began to work well immediately.

"I think it is important that you like each other for a start," Green said. "Respect and trust have got to come out of that as well, or it's all shot to pieces."

Together Green and Davis are a determined and dedicated pair. After winning a hard-fought Olympic Selection Trials regatta against close rivals Jeni Lidgett and Addy Bucek, of Victoria, they planned an intensive training and racing program in New Zealand, Japan and Europe prior to the Games.

The women took a highly professional approach and made thorough preparations. They use a system of training which they believe has helped them succeed.

"It's basically a question of working out what are your weak points and strong points and just working on them," she says.

"It sounds really simple and obvious. But each time you go out, there should be a set goal—an object to be achieved—and when you achieve it you go home. You have to be quite firm about the fact that you're only going to work on one set thing for, say, two hours, and after that training's off."

Green and Davis spent a month training in New Zealand with the New Zealand teams. They then went to Japan for the Shiseido Cup, an invitational series for the Women's 470s and finished a creditable second. The team came in 5th during the Kiel Week regatta in Germany during

## The 470 Class

THE 470 was designed in 1983 as a modern, high performance fibreglass planing dinghy. It was designed to have moderate characteristics, to be sailed by most people—small, large, young, old. It met with instant success and was an important factor in the explosive growth of dinghy sailing on the European continent in the late 80s and early 70s. It had a dual role: that of recreational and family sailboat and that of a highly competitive racing boat.

By 1969 there were more than 8,000 470s, mostly in Europe, and the 470 was given International Yacht Racing Union (IYRU) international status. By 1972, the fleet had increased to more than 14,000 with worldwide distribution, and the 470 was selected as an Olympic class. The 470 was first sailed in the 1976 Olympic Games. Lighter and narrower than most small dinghies, the 470 is very sensitive to body movement and favours combined skipper and crew's weight of about 125kg (275lbs) (optimal skipper size is 165-180cm [5ft5in-5ft10in] and 57-64kg [125-140lbs], and optimal crew size is 177-183cm [5ft10in-6ft] and 61kg-68kg [135-150lbs]).

Designer: Andre Cornu

Length: 4.7m (15ft6in)

Beam: 1.7m (5ft6in)

Draft: 0.97m (3ft2in)

Weight: 119kg (264lbs)

Sail area: 12.7m<sup>2</sup> (137sq ft)

Crew: 2

Type: centreboard

Olympic class since 1976; Women's 470 since 1988.

(from US Yacht Racing Union)

June, and 14th at the European titles in France the same month. Green and Davis rallied to come in first at the Intervela regatta in Italy during July.

While the Australian Olympic Federation provides substantial support, it in no way covers the expenses of the team. The two women spent much time in the early part of the year raising money for this project. They expect the campaign to cost themselves in the vicinity of \$80,000—\$100,000, most of which will be borne by themselves, with the aid of their families and friends.

Green was lucky enough to have the support of Montoro Resources, the company she worked for as project manager, to assist with sponsorship in the early part of the women's campaign. "People have been very helpful, but we'll still have bills to pay when we get back. It's going to be tough for a while."

Green's comment on the establishment of the International 470 women's Regatta was positive: "It's certainly given us a good opportunity and we're not going to knock that. I think it will serve to raise the standards of women's sailing; it may take 10 years to do it but it may take less when you've got people like Australian Jessica Crisp (second in the World Youth titles in sailboards) coming through—it's given girls of her age around the world something to strive for."

## SISTERSHIP

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sea and sunshine  
masts and stays

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the back cover.



# Signed, sealed and delivered

*They end their day feeling and smelling decidedly fishy, but they wouldn't have it any other way – MAUREEN CUMMUSKEY talks to a pair of individualists in non-traditional jobs at Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo.*

STARTING work at Taronga Park Zoo, Sydney, Australia, fulfilled Ady's lifelong ambition to work with exotic animals, and for Kerrie, becoming a zookeeper was a welcome career change.

"I'd had 10 years experience as a vet nurse," said Kerrie, "and that was enough.

"There was no natural progression for me; no way I could advance further."

Both Ady and Kerrie completed the Zoo Keeper's course, and coincidentally their first placement at the Zoo was in the Friendship Farm Orphanage.

"I was really fascinated by the seals," said Ady, "and while I was doing my course, all my assignments focused on seals!"

Kerrie commented that although it had taken her a while to decide what area she wanted to work in, she too decided on the seal department.

"It's a popular area," said Ady, "and a very hard one to get into."

"I was lucky that someone left, but there was a lot of competition for the job. I got through the interview OK though, and here I am."

When Kerrie finally decided on the seal department there were no positions available at the time.

"I spent a lot of time talking to the head of the department and the other keepers," said Kerrie, "and I guess my persistence paid off."

"They created a new position for me and I've now been in this department for two years."

"Working with these marine animals is such a unique opportunity," said Kerrie, "especially as I've been given the chance to train the seals. This is primarily done for research purposes, but we also put on commercial shows at the Zoo."

"A few years ago, it would have been unheard of to employ a woman as a trainer," said Kerrie.

"However, our current head of the department has no qualms on this score, and is very supportive."

Ady and Kerrie explained that what is seen in the show only represents about one third of the training.

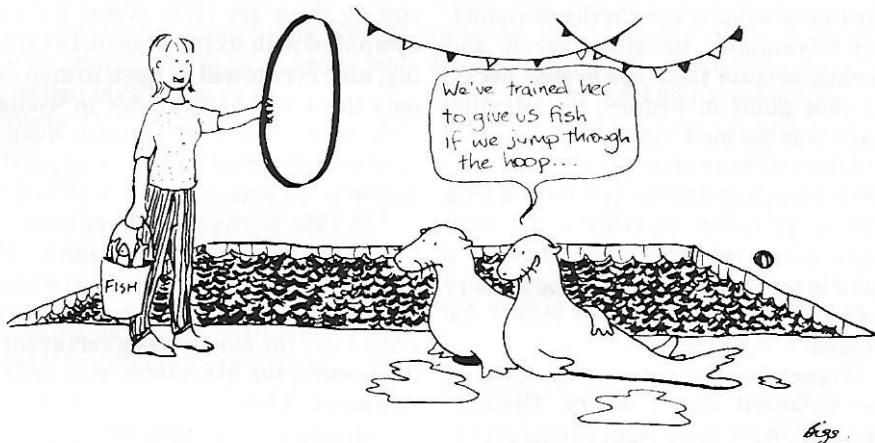


Illustration by AMANDA BIGGS

on each seal, and are called upon to write and present papers to various forums.

There are also opportunities for field trips to study seals in the wild, and on occasions the seal keepers don scuba tanks to feed the seals in Sydney Harbour.

The keepers are also responsible for giving medication and tending sick animals.

"It's not an easy job," said Ady.

"We get one weekend off in five, work outside in all conditions, and have to put up with smelling pretty fishy most of the time."

"In fact," said Kerrie, "I notice that when I catch the bus it empties out pretty quickly after I get on!"

"You have to be dedicated," said Ady.

"These animals depend on you, so if there is a problem you stay until it's fixed. You can't just go home at 5 o'clock."

Despite all this, Ady and Kerrie are adamant that they've got the best job in the world.

"We wouldn't change anything in it!"

*Contrary to popular belief, a lot of things we teach them such as balancing balls, do not come naturally, so it would be impossible to get them to do it if they did not like it.*

"There is also the endless preparation of food," said Kerrie, "and sorting through 130 kilos of half-frozen fish each week is not all that pleasant!"

Paperwork is an important part of the job. The keepers have to file a daily report

**KERRIE HAYNES-LOVELL AND ADY D'ETLORRE – ZOOKEEPERS,** from Women and Work, newsletter of the Women's Bureau, Department of Employment, Education and Training, GPO Box 9880, Canberra, ACT, 2601, Australia. Editor, Maureen Cummuskey, (062) 47 5806.

# A woman's place is – in the Olympics

*Once it was a case of hanging garlands around the necks of the boy heroes to mark their Olympic triumph. Now the most famous Games of all are open to women – at least, parts of them. And only as competitors . . .*

IN 1896, when the first modern Olympics were held women were relegated to the role of kissing the cheeks of victorious Olympians, hanging laurels and medals around their celebrated necks. At that point in history, no Olympic sport was deemed suitable for women.

Attitudes have changed dramatically since 1896, but women still have a long way to go before equality is achieved right down the lines, from having a voice in the Olympic Federation to there being an equal number of events for women.

Women have constantly knocked at the hallowed doors of the Olympic Federation for their right to compete at the most elite sporting standard the world has to offer.

The fight is not over yet. Women are still under-represented on every level of

Olympic structure. Examples, which are not isolated, include the facts that in rowing there are eight events for men compared with six for women. In canoeing, nine events will be open to men and only three will be available to women. How many elite sportswomen have to miss out altogether before equal participation in all events can be achieved?

The tide is changing gradually. In 1968, at the Mexican Games, Enriqueta Basilo became the first woman to light the Olympic Torch. Sixteen years later the most prestigious event in the Games, the Marathon, was opened to women. These are significant Olympic victories for women, but only touch the tip of the iceberg.

Women currently play a minor role in sports administration on all levels of competition. At the elite level, this be-

comes even more pronounced.

In 1984, the Australian Olympic Federation included three women as Sports Delegates and 45 men. In all other sections of the Federation men are exclusively responsible for all decision-making processes that affect the Games. There will be few women travelling with the Australian medical and support team to Seoul.

However, women are gradually winning a bigger say and a better go in sport. As women filter into the administration of the Olympics they will have a say in the decision-making processes which currently set women to the side of the sporting agenda.

(This article is from *Women and the Olympics*, by Lisa Waller, in *Active – Women in Sport Newsletter*, Winter 88, Women's Sport Promotion Unit, Australian Sports Commission, PO Box 176, Belconnen, ACT, 2601.)

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If you're looking for a laid-back tropical holiday under canvas or in a cabin on a tiny coral island, Lady Elliot Island could be the spot for you. SARAH MILLER reports.



Lady Elliot Island, Queensland, Australia

WITH the setting in of winter in the southern hemisphere it is time for warm water women to head north. Most would keep costs down and drive, but not too far. Lady Elliot Island is the most southern island of the Great Barrier Reef. It is 80 km NE of Bundaberg, 400 km N of Brisbane, capital city of Queensland.

The island is an ideal place for scuba divers, snorkellers, reef walkers and bird watchers.

It has a "family" resort and caters to people looking for a relaxing holiday. The only wrecks are ships. Accommodation is in cabins, with or without amenities, or in permanently erected tents with wooden floors and frames. Shared amenities are close by. The tents have 4 single beds (2 bunks) and cabins have a double bed and 1 or 2 bunks. All meals are supplied in a smorgasbord style and are of good quality for traditional eaters. Vegetarians are not so well catered for but won't go hungry.

Scuba divers should take all their gear except weight belt and tank. Diving in the coral gardens is a memorable experience with almost landscaped garden beds alive with a wide variety of fish. Unfortunately when I was there it was too rough to get to

the outer reef. Guided dives are swum too fast to fully explore small regions; however, the dive masters are confident, professional and friendly. The dive guides will take your weight belt and tank to the dive site and they provide you with a cart for the rest of your gear for the five minute walk to the dive entry point.

Snorkelling can be on the reef flat at high tide or, for those unafraid of depths, 10-20m above the coral gardens. It is not often that I have seen divers snorkel! Introductory dives are available in very calm conditions.

The reef flat provides an interesting introduction to reef life. Guided tours are available, complete with glass bottom bucket, walking sticks and old sand shoes. Hints on snorkelling are given to those adventurous enough to take that one step further.

The resort was built in 1985 following complete destruction of the vegetation by guano mining and wild goats. The bird life on the island has increased and is being encouraged. Some rarer species of birds are now starting to nest.

There have been a number of ship wrecks on the island. One of the more

recent casualties was recycled into a bar near the dining room. Bits and pieces of other wrecks are scattered around the island.

#### Costs (in \$A in May 1988):

Package: 4 days, 3 nights inc. meals and air fare (ex Bundaberg)	\$355
Package: 7 days, 6 nights (as above)	\$579
Air fare (return ex Bundaberg) for day trip* (arr. 11am, dep. 3pm)	\$120
(NB: 10kg baggage limit, although nothing was said about my 18kg dive kit plus backpack with clothes.)	
Diving (per dive inc. tank and weights)	\$15
Dive equipment (additional per dive)	\$15
Snorkelling equipment (unsure if per day or 1/2 day)	\$10-\$20
Bar prices	reasonable

Car storage in Bundaberg (under cover, per night) incl. transfer to airport \$5

\* Day trip to Lady Musgrave Island is probably more interesting.

# A rare bird visits Lady Elliot

*The appearance of a very rare bird breeding hundreds of miles further south than received wisdom prescribes will mean a revision of the ornithological text books.*  
**ANTHONY WALSH reports.**

A MOST amazing thing has happened on Lady Elliot Island.

The very rare red-tailed tropic bird is now nesting there in increasing numbers following the appearance of a single nesting pair in 1985.

The realisation that this most beautiful white bird, which sports two long red "streamer" feathers from its tail, has now extended its habitat to include nesting on the southern section of the Great Barrier Reef will necessitate the re-writing of a number of authoritative books on sea birds which, until now, have stated that the red-tailed tropic bird's nesting habitat has been concentrated off the far-northern waters of Queensland, mainly around Raine Island.

The managing director of the holiday resort on Lady Elliot Island, Mr John French, has each year monitored the behaviour pattern of the tropic birds since they first arrived in 1985 to nest and rear their solitary chicks.

"In 1985 one pair arrived and successfully reared one chick, while in 1986 two pairs nested and each pair raised a chick. In this season, 1987/88, three pairs arrived, but only two are in the process of rearing their young," Mr French explained.

"The tropic birds are just one of over 30 species of sea birds now in the process of nesting on Lady Elliot Island, but they are by far the most popular with our guests - so much so that some people are coming from



Young visitors get close to a nesting pair of red-tailed tropic birds and their chick on Lady Elliot Island.

the other side of the world to get a glimpse of them. And that experience is quite easy to enjoy as one of the pairs is nesting no more than five metres from one of our accommodation units."

Mr French said that the tropic birds were very composed and calm during nesting and did not seem to mind in the least the

interest they were creating among guests on the island.

"We just hope that the nesting pairs increase each year and that the authors of books on birdlife on the Great Barrier Reef do not mind altering their text on the red-tailed tropic birds prior to their next reprint."

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*Event by event, class by class, women are entering competitive sailing – and doing very well, too. SUE BOCHNER, herself a 12ft skiff skipper, reports on Sydney women who are trying their skills in 12ft skiff racing.*

## *The challenge of the twelves*



**Flat out in a 30 knot wind – Sue Bochner and Adrienne Calahan practice their upwind style.**

FEW women consider the challenge of taking on the ranks of the Sydney skiffs. In the season just finished there were three women at the helms of 12ft skiffs, regarded as the most difficult of the skiff classes racing on Sydney Harbour.

Ailsa Wilson sails her 12ft skiff in local and club events, and is a member of the Abbotsford 12ft Skiff Club.

Two sailors who are more competitively involved are Adrienne Calahan and myself. We have achieved unprecedented levels of success in the male-dominated skiff world. For the first time in the history of the class, women were selected to compete in the Interdominion Championship, held in Auckland in early January, 1988.

Adrienne, who has had a few years' experience in the class, finished a creditable 6th in the Interdominion Championship, in her boat named The Law Book Company.

I achieved selection in the Australian

team in my first season in the class (not usually achieved by most skippers in the class for a few seasons) and finished 10th

“

*It takes a fair bit of courage to be capable of standing on the outrigger flying a disproportionately large spinnaker, navigating a safe course down the Harbour while the boat is going at a dangerously high speed.*

”

in the Championships in Auckland in my then unsponsored boat Bloo Soo. I recently secured a sponsorship from Con-

tender Sailcloth.

Adrienne and I were also successful in the Australian Championships, held on Sydney Harbour over Easter. Adrienne again was placed 6th in the Open Championship, while I came 9th.

Our results are even more impressive given the strong and blustery conditions under which this season's major championships have been held. Auckland Harbour is renowned for its difficult conditions and large waves. Every race of the Interdominion series was sailed in blustery conditions of between 18 and 35 knots.

Both of us have male crews. Neither of us would deny the importance of our crews in the boat (for both physical and moral strength). 12-footers are in many ways a crew's boat; however, the size of the spinnakers and the rigs in relation to the small hull make crew strength and skipper-crew

**Continued page 10**

# The challenge of the twelves

## From page 9

co-ordination paramount. The boats are very difficult to steer well, but attract relatively small and lightweight skippers because they don't need to rely on strength (or massive body weight). "Muscle jobs" can be delegated to the crew, while the skipper compromises through technique. We also set our boats up to suit our light weights with smaller, less powerful rigs than our male counterparts.

Technique is still only part of the answer. It takes a fair bit of courage to be capable of standing on the outrigger flying a disproportionately large spinnaker, navigating a safe course down the Harbour while the boat is going at a dangerously high speed – but then that's skiff sailing!

All of us have come into the class from different backgrounds, and for different reasons.

Adrienne, who has had little experience in other dinghy classes, was impressed by watching the 12fts on the Lane Cove River. After battling for a few seasons in an older boat, she and crew Michael Carter (sailmaker in the Frazer Sails' Sydney loft) launched a new boat and a much more professional campaign this season.

I have a strong family connection with the class. I bought my boat from my brother Michael last winter; Michael is



**A close finish – Sue and Adrienne dash for the finish line with Olympic Sails in heat 7 of the Interdominions.**

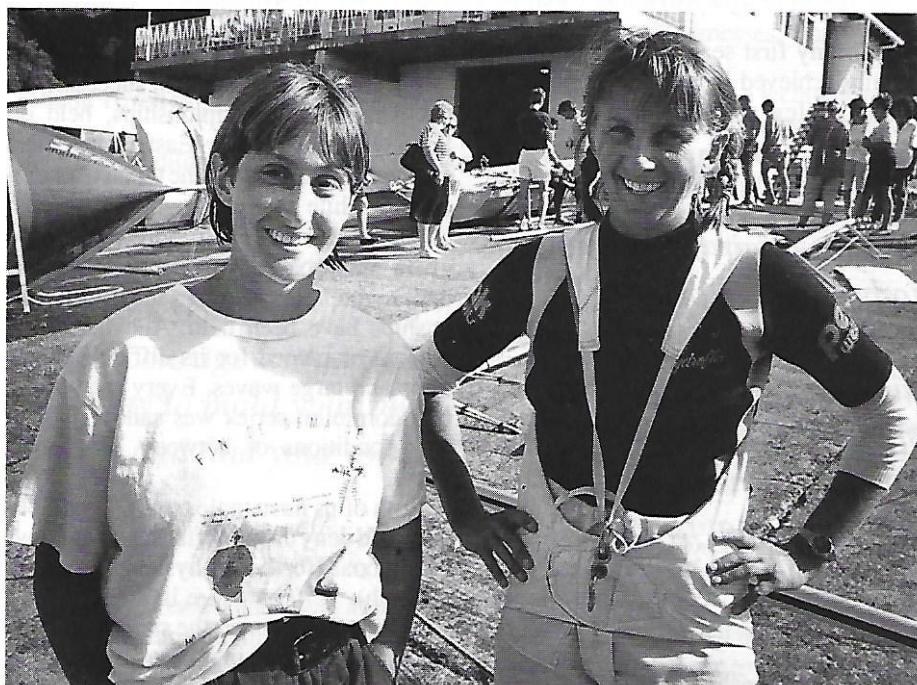
also a sailmaker, and makes all the family skiff sails.

My crew Rob Rickard and I have been through many dinghy classes, but most recently been racing skiff Moths. As well, my boyfriend races a 12, and is the current State and National Champion.

Ailsa also has family ties with the class. Her brother Bruce, sailing from Abbotsford, gave her the encouragement to

give it a go. Ailsa competes admirably well, given the limitations of an old boat and unsponsored campaign.

Recently, Adrienne has been asked to skipper one of the new boats in the prestigious and challenging 18ft skiff class. She will be sailing a skiff sponsored by Ella Bache, a French cosmetics company. It is one of six new boats for the Sydney-based NSW 18ft Skiff Club.



**Sue and Adrienne outside the Auckland Yacht Club.**

Pictures courtesy NZ Herald

**WHAT?**

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subscribed to  
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page.***

A GROUP of Sydney sailors is proposing an all-women's campaign for the 1988 Sydney-Hobart Race, December 26, 1988. Members of the group are currently seeking a sponsor, and hoping to charter a yacht, preferably a Farr 37. Ansett Airlines have agreed to assist with airfares for interstate crew to fly to Sydney for the training period. The intention is to put up a serious campaign to win the race. For more information contact *Felicity Braham at Australian Sailing School, The Spit, Mosman, NSW 2088, (02) 60 3077.*

### Women's Whitbread Round the World Race

A team of women is preparing a boat, Maiden Great Britain, and crew for the Whitbread Round The World Race to begin in September 1989. For further information about the challenge contact *Tracy Edwards, 1 Hamble Manor Court, Hamble, Hampshire SO3 5GB, UK.*

September 12-14, 1988 **Fifth International Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology**, Amsterdam, Netherlands. For further information contact *Secretariat ISBSA 5, Rijksmuseum Netherlands Scheepvaartmuseum, Kattenburgerplein 1, 1018 KK Amsterdam, Netherlands*

September 19-22, 1988 **International Maritime Lecturers Association, Fifth International Conference on Maritime Education and Training**, Canadian Coast Guard College, Sydney, Nova Scotia. For further information contact *James C. Kelly, Canadian Coast Guard College, PO Box 4500, Sydney, NS B1P 6L1, Canada.*

September 23-25, 1988 **The New Wave**, 4th Annual Conference of the Marine Education Society of Australasia, to be held in Townsville, Queensland. A conference for those who care about the future of our Marine Environment. For further information contact *MESA Conference, PO Box 1379, Townsville, QLD, 4810, Australia.*

September 25-28, 1988 **International Congress of Maritime Museums**, First Australian Conference, Sydney Maritime Museum, Sydney, Australia. For further information contact *ICCM 1988 Conference Secretariat, Dulcie Stretton Associates, 70 Glenmore Rd, Paddington, NSW 2021.*

**Promotion Day**, Sunday October 2, 1988. The Women's Committee of the Yachting Association of NSW are organising a day to make boats of various classes available for the public to both view and sail. Woollahra Sailing Club will host the event. For more information contact *Yachting Association of New South Wales, (02) 27 5163.*

October 15-16, 1988 **13th Annual Whaling Symposium**, Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, Massachusetts. For further information contact *Dr Stuart M Frank, PO Box 297, Sharon, MA 02067, USA.*

October 21-22, 1988 **Victorian State Conference, MESA, Current Issues: Parks and Pollution**, Marine Studies Centre, Queenscliffe, VIC. Contact *Julie Schwartz, (052) 52 3344.*

**Aqua Action 88**, scheduled for October 25-28, 1988 at the University of Sydney, is a program designed for people involved with water safety, through their work or sport and recreation interests, who wish to be ready for the 1990s. It will raise thought-provoking issues, reveal the best and the worst of today's scene and explore the possibilities of tomorrow. For more information contact *The Royal Life Saving Society - Australia, PO Box 1567, North Sydney, NSW 2060, Aust.*

February 23-24, 1989 **Life in the Polar Winter**, Eighth International Symposium of the Arctic Centre of the University of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands.

March 28-April 1, 1989 **Industrial Revolutions and the Sea, 1800-1980**, Royal Academy of Sciences, Brussels. Organiser is the Belgian Commission for Maritime History.

June, 1989 **13th Conference of the North American Society for Oceanic History**, National Maritime Museum, San Francisco. For further information contact *Dr William N. Still Jr, Department of History, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353, USA.*

July 10-14, 1989 **The Fifth World Conference on Transport Research**, Yokohama, Japan. For further information contact *Professor Hideo Nakamura,*

*Department of Civil Engineering, University of Tokyo, 7-3-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo, Japan.*

The World Ship Trust has plans for an International Maritime Heritage Year in 1990. The object is to arouse worldwide interest in our maritime heritage so that important ships and other nautical artifacts can be recorded, and appropriate steps taken to ensure their preservation. Any interested person or group could contact *The Vice Chairman, World Ship Trust, 129A North St, Burwell, Cambridge CB5 0BB, UK.*

### Women to deploy on Combat Logistic Force vessels

(from *Minerva's Bulletin Board*)

United States Navy women will be assigned to ships in the Combat Logistic Forces before the end of the (northern) summer. The CLF oiler Cimarron, home-ported at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, will be ready to deploy women in August, and Monongahela, home-ported in Norfolk, Virginia, will take women on board a few weeks later. Each of these vessels will have two women officers and two chiefs as well as 20 enlisted women. Both Cimarron and Monongahela were commissioned in 1981 and were chosen to receive the first women because they are the most modern CLF ships and so will require little modification.

The US Navy approved the assignment of women to 26 of the 37 CLF ships last December and will board them as the Navy completes necessary alterations. The CLF ships from which women are still excluded are high speed ammunition and replenishment ships which normally operate integral to battle groups. The ships to which women are being assigned are slower and operate between a shore base or port supply point out to a battle group. Although combat is not their direct mission, they are likely targets for enemy submarines, air attack, and surface ships. Both women and men aboard, says the Navy, "will be exposed to extreme hazards".

### Coast Guard enlisted men and women compete for positions at sea

(from *Minerva's Bulletin Board*)

There are no gender-based restrictions on assignments in the United States Coast Guard, but the decommissioning of older Coast Guard cutters has lead to increased

Continued page 21

# Joan takes the

*After flying to Australia from her home on the other side of the Pacific, JOAN PICKARD discovered that a voyage by sea around the coast of Australia ended, in fact, in a kind of homecoming.*

THIS voyage started in the air. Just over a year ago I was flying to Sydney from Vancouver, excited to be coming, sad to be leaving. The solid, familiar land vanishing beneath me had been my home for over half a century.

Now I was airborne, dealing with the disquieting apprehensions of a newcomer and the equally uneasy thoughts I always have about air travel. In fact, I feel the same nervousness about flying as I used to feel about sailing.

Customarily I scrutinise the passengers to select someone I imagine will take over in an emergency, exempting myself from this role as a safety measure for all. On this flight my choice was a tall red-bearded young man. He moved with quiet authority and he took the seat beside me. His name was Colin Kesteven and he was returning to Australia to take command of the new South Australian Sail Training Vessel, One And All, as it joined the First Fleet Re-enactment Voyage. We talked and I began to dream.

During the ensuing year I followed the progress of the First Fleet with increasing interest. As my initial traveller's enthusiasm gave way to the sobering realities of being a stranger in a different culture, I found myself imagining how the first immigrants must have reacted to their changed lives. It was poignantly easy to identify with their uncertainties, their expectations, and the actualities of starting over again. I needed what they did – friends, confidence, and acceptance in and of this alien environment. They were coming by sea, that generous and terrifying primeval element that encircles this ancient land.

I began to wonder if the apprenticeship and promise of such a passage might pro-



Joan Pickard climbs the rigging of the One and All (above); her sketch of Apollo Bay, Victoria (below centre).

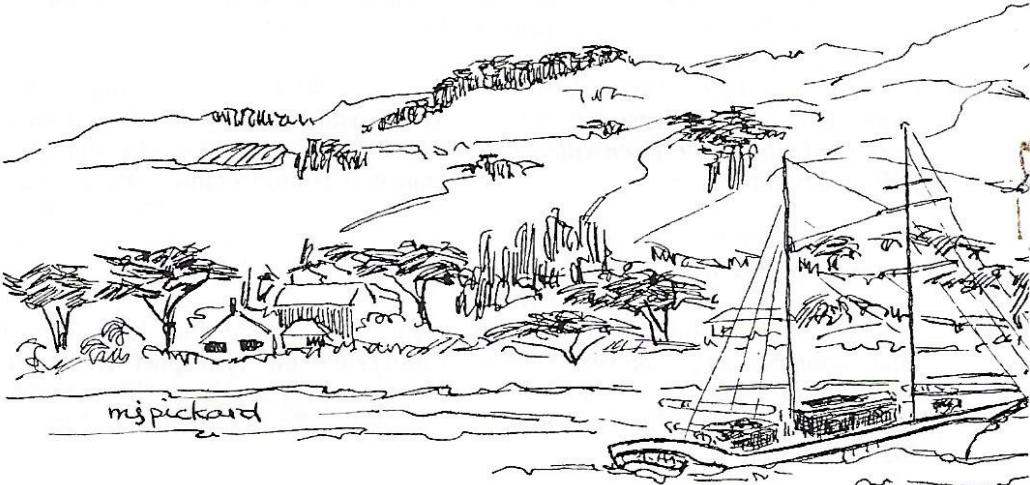
vide the mutual affinity needed between a lonely migrant and her chosen home. The powerful symbolism of the sea could not be denied. I would find out.

By the time The First Fleet anchored in Farm Cove on Australia Day, I was signed on as a trainee crew member aboard One And All. For the months of March, April and May I would be making my personal voyage of discovery around Australia as the Fleet followed the routes of the early settlers, the whalers, the gold miners. We would visit the major ports of Melbourne, Portland, Adelaide, Hobart, Eden and Newcastle with the anomaly of Sanctuary Cove thrown in as a showcase of 20th century development. We would also sail secluded waterways and call at beautiful coastal villages and resorts as time and weather permitted.

I was scared. I was exhilarated. I was hesitant. I was eager. That would prove to be the constant mixture of my emotions during the days ahead. But I had chosen well.

One And All is a graceful wooden brigantine of 160 tonnes, built with loving labour by the not-so-ordinary people of South Australia. These volunteers and professionals were motivated by a vision and a love of the sea to lay the keel, shape the hull, build the living space and, finally, set the sails. One And All was a fitting object for an evocative odyssey.

She was also a literal example of the liberating equality of the sea. Out there in the world of wind and waves, the sea plays



# long way home

no favourites. She exacts an honesty that removes pretensions. On board One And All all trainees, regardless of sex, age or occupation, were expected to serve two four-hour watches each day, during which they were rostered for duty on the wheel and on the bow. We would also do galley duty, clean the heads, assist with maintenance, and be on call when needed. We would take our orders from the officers and the permanent crew. We were often tired, often wet and grubby, and often amazed at our unknown abilities.

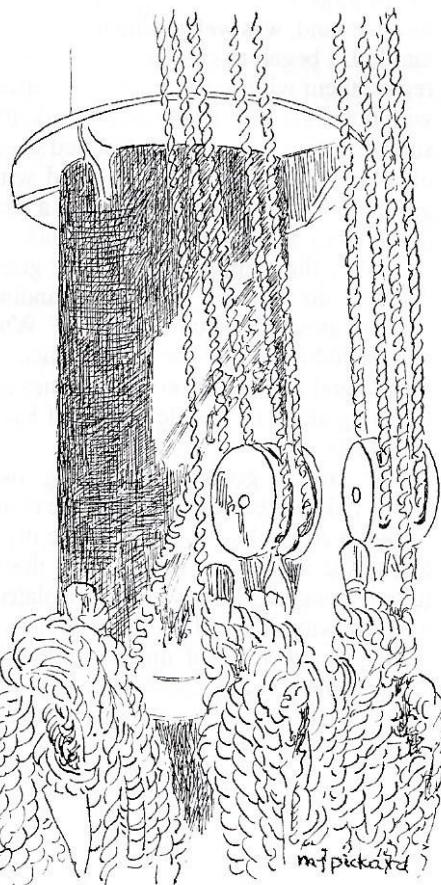
This levelling egalitarianism provided comforting satisfaction for an independent foreign female with no sailing experience. The cohesive force was willingness and I was there because of that. Scrubbing the deck was easy, but I hated that activity most. Learning the ropes was more complicated. One rough day, while circling the deck to practice my balancing act, I counted 87 belaying pins with ropes attached to them. Tony, the First Mate, said I'd missed some. I despaired of ever knowing what went where. When Kelly called, "Stand by that clew," I didn't have a clue. But I learned. Slowly. And wondered why I'd placed myself in another unfamiliar situation.

The moment of truth arrived on the yard arms. Up there one is starkly dependent on personal determination and courage. It took me a long time to risk the challenge, but when I finally accomplished it I felt as though I'd scaled Everest and survived. Working on the bowsprit with the jibs,

however, became my favourite job, especially when the graceful, sparkling dolphins came to play. These irreplaceable moments provided the certainty of being in the right place at the right time.

When, Jamie, the bosun, assigned me the task of repainting the lettering on the dinghy and the life preservers my experience as an artist gave me confidence. It did not save me from the humiliation of placing black paint where it was not meant to be while painting the shrouds, though. Jamie assured me I hadn't permanently damaged the ship. It was a relief, quickly dispelled at the helm when the skipper called, "How's your head?" and I replied, "Confused."

There was no perplexity, however, about my role on One And All. It was what I chose to make it within the limits of rank and physical strength. Never at any time was it based on sexism. Indeed, aboard the ship there existed a refreshing androgynous attitude that made being braless nothing more than an anatomical comfort, while seasickness becomes a misery not determined by reproductive organs. For over two months the permanent crew of 12 included a young woman as Second Mate. Five other skilled and energetic females worked as permanent crew the entire voyage. There was never any patronising distinction made about their duties or capability, and they never exploited their femininity. Gender is inconsequential when coiling ropes or furling sails. Expertise is primary, and it is obvious that nei-



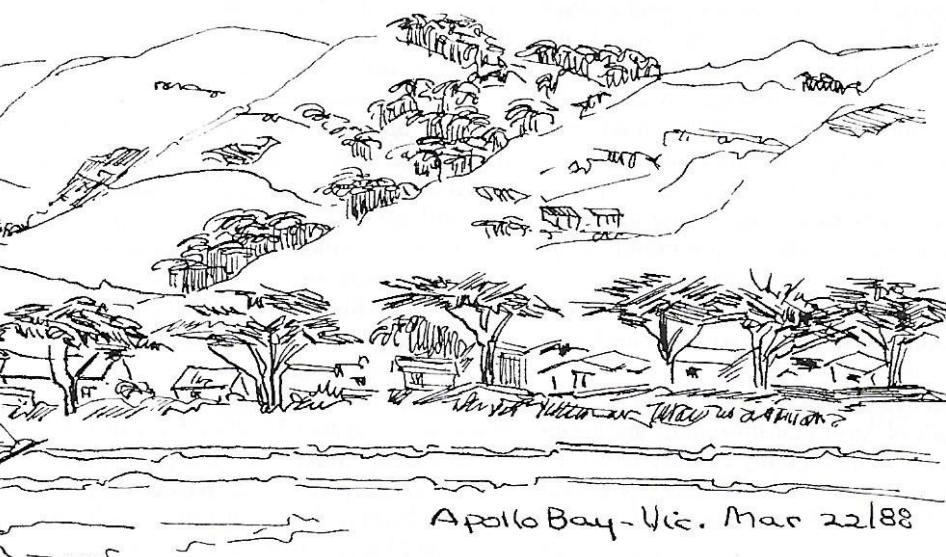
Foremast fife rail, One and All.

ther sex has a monopoly on that commodity. "Let's go mate," applies indiscriminately aboard ship to males and females alike. It is a human expression, not an indication of status within the group. It is as refreshing as the ocean breeze.

These breezes sometimes become gales, pitching One and All about Bass Strait and the Tasman, and sending everyone reeling across the decks or the saloon. When the wind blows away your words and the water crashes over your head, priorities become clear. Personal fears and inconveniences are secondary to the preservation of the ship. There is no more effective cure for introspection and egocentricity than the allegiance demanded by a square-rigger fighting unkind, vicious seas.

Happily though, more often than not, these waves brought us ashore. Though not always in sight, there was always the land waiting beyond the swelling horizon. This ancient land, this stern sunburnt land, this lush verdant land, this increasingly

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# The long way home

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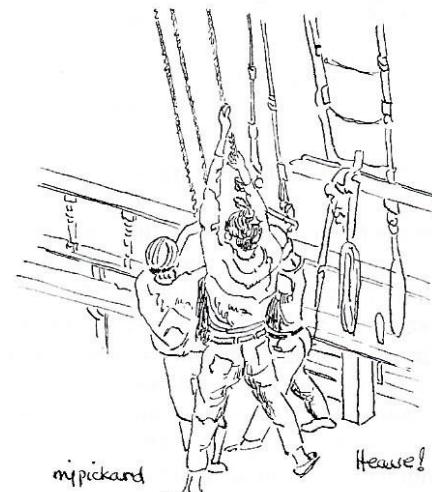
familiar land, was welcoming me at every landfall. I began to cherish her shores, to regard them with wonder and leave them with nostalgia. It is impossible to ride the surf of a turquoise sea into a deserted sliver of silvery beach and not be filled with gratitude for the generosity of such a land that makes it possible. Who cannot be moved by the seemingly haphazard grandeur of the Twelve Apostles standing sentinel along the southern shores? Who can be indifferent to the significance of French and Anglo-Saxon place names alternating along the gentle fringes of Kangaroo Island?

The crusty, golden hills rising like newly baked bread loaves along the coast of South Australia beckon with the mystery of the implacable bush always there, tufted along the slopes. In the isolated, majestic waterways of south western Tasmania, the promise of untrdden places expands the consciousness while the rampant green of Queensland's eastern border

extravagant bouquets of lilies and protea for the saloon; they brought Barossa reds and sun-warmed avocados. They shared barbecues in the bush and picnics on the beach. They exploded fireworks and formed parades. They danced for us. They made music for us.

And out there, aboard our floating home we discovered the exhilaration of combining our efforts to reef the mainsail or brace the yard arms. We joined in the carefree nonsense of water balloon naval battles and costume dinners when Sly, our exuberant cook, refused to feed us unless we dressed up. We exchanged ideas and opinions, even dreams, on lazy effortless afternoons when there was only the rush of the water and the whisper of the sails to make soft intrusion. Night watch under the tapestry of stars, riding the platinum path of the moon across a phosphorescent, spangled sea became the time of silent awe, what Jock accurately described as "a spiritual experience". These celebrations of life create bonds between the participants that no separation can break.

We overcame language and age barriers out there as well. Ruth explained that "Woop Woop" was any location off the beaten track instead of an exclamation of surprise or alarm; and I told Michael that Canadians were inclined to say, "Pardon?" instead of, "Sorry?" when they were uncertain about what had been said. I found myself using this word incessantly, I disclosed to Michael, because of the Australian accent that still puzzled me. He looked at me in mock bewilderment, said "Pardon?" in a broad accent, and we both laughed. Kelly favoured me with a whimsical nickname, calling me "Just Joan", and gave me a haircut on the forward deck. As a reward she insisted on tinting the remaining grey hair with green and blue food colouring so that I resembled a moulting peacock. "OK, Just Joan," she said, "you don't look like my mother anymore." I believed her when I saw myself in the mirror. It would have been more startling with the pink and orange "Fruit loop" necklace Sandy and Mary made me for my birthday at sea.

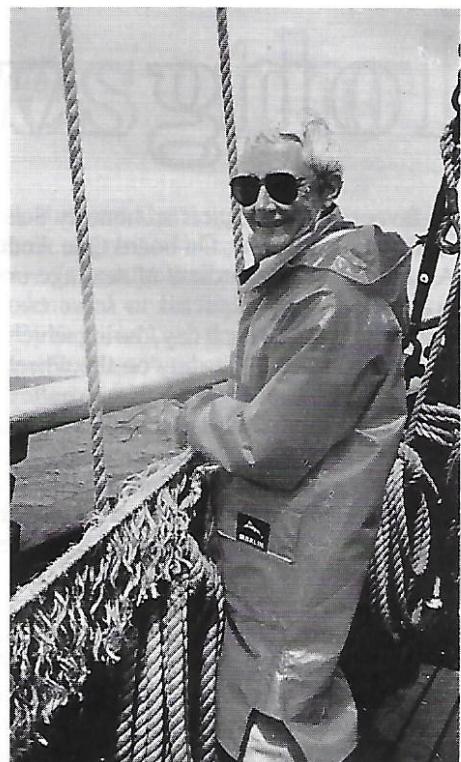


Yo-ho Heave-ho!

soothes the eyes and spirit of a salt-sprayed sailor. Each arrival became a home-coming; each departure a longing to return, with another adventure in between.

This growing affection for the land I had chosen was enhanced by the people who live in it, who sail its waters, and come down to its shores. They came to meet us, calling, "Welcome," from the bobbing, tooting, flagbillowing, polished, fish-smeared craft. They followed us to sea saying, "Good-bye. Thank you for coming", and at sea, tossed gleaming shark over the taffrail for our lunch, promising, "See you in Hobart." They brought us

At every landfall I discovered the magnitude of Australian hospitality and acceptance. Sheila took my laundry home and returned it not only washed but ironed; surely one of the most thoughtful gifts a sailor can receive. Geoff packed a lunch



Joan making baggywrinkle, yet another of the many tasks on board requiring no gender-based skills.

and took me tramping the dunes surrounding his summer home at Barwon Heads. Ross took me yacht racing at Sandringham. The vendor at the Salamanca market in Hobart held my hand and said, "I'll touch you for luck," after telling me of his big win at the casino. Overlooking Discovery Bay at sunset, I shared lambs chops with Paul and Susan; and had a bath in a real tub at a home in the Adelaide hills where another Geoff and another Ruth shared their home with me. Near Brisbane Jackie and Peter wined me and dined me, and at Port Adelaide Phillip took me home for lunch. Tony rescued me at the bus stop in the rain in Melbourne and took me downtown saying, "Call me if you need anything while you're here."

When I joined in singing "Waltzing Matilda" around the campfire in the velvet dark on the shore at Simmonds Bay, and heard those haunting words coming from the yard arms with dozens of Australians joining in from their small craft below on Port Phillip Bay, or listened to the marching band playing this melody on the wharf at Newcastle, my heart was full of emotion for my adopted land.

On that last day, sailing out of Broken Bay towards Sydney Heads, Kelly came to me and said, "Make sure you get time at the wheel today, Just Joan. We need experienced drivers." Unquestionably, I felt at home and I was coming home by sea.

## Before Sunrise

(Recalling the death by drowning of poet Harri Jones, who fell from a cliff above Newcastle Beach.)

The wind is a hard cold binding round my breasts.  
Upward, a hawk hangs and a gull glides.  
(The memory of an albatross circles in my mind.)  
Below, the white waves grind the rock to Sunday sand.

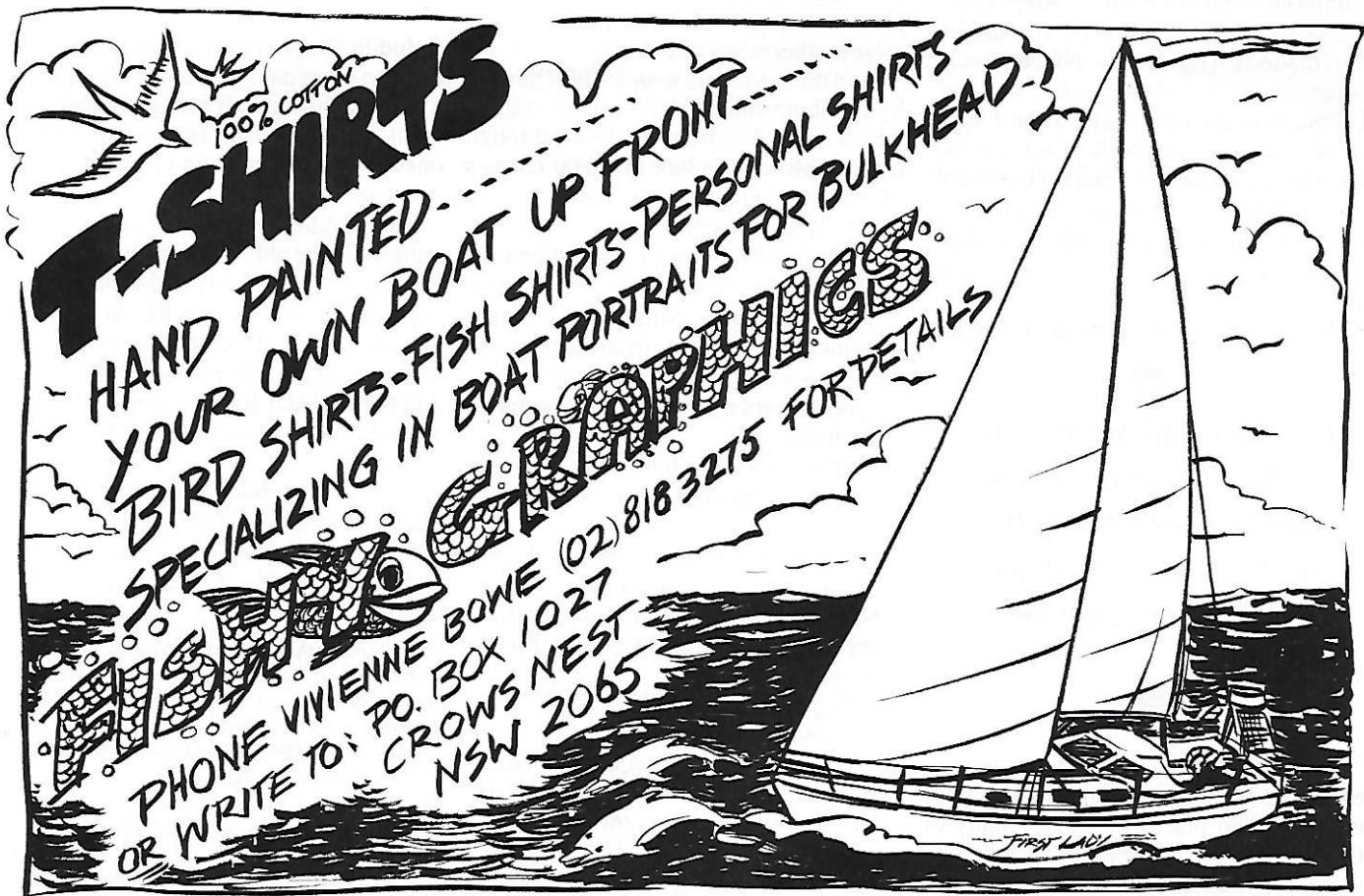
The deep hole where the dead man lay,  
almost at rest, upon his fluid final couch  
(forgetting, at last, the pain of daily doubt –  
there in the quiet certainty of death)  
today, roils with the white fierce pain of wind-torn tide.  
The steel wind beats his cold sea-pulse to life,  
to burning cold and crippled life again.  
Where to go? The path turns here at the edge –  
back to the city, warm and grey within its huddled household  
walls,  
or out and down, out and on,  
a black, cold, sliding shriek of night  
and then the sea, waiting as the wind waits,  
watching the sky, rieving the air  
for small suburban Icari – too high  
there on the tip of living –  
there on the beach head of that white and stormy choice –  
that brilliant, cold, absurd and laughing fall

into the knowing, from becoming, out of being,  
sailing the white chaotic ocean of the sky  
on wings of choice  
down – into that one reply that has to satisfy  
because there is no more.

On every cliff, a path,  
on every path the two ways – back to being,  
on and up and out by choice into the white and laughing  
emptiness.

“Choose,” cries the hawk, the gull, the wind –  
(The silent albatross has climbed the sky,  
too far away for me to hear it call.)  
and I choose down and back and warmth.  
The steel band eases on my breasts.  
The cold song singing from the white rock fades.  
The stars are loosening their hold upon the sky.  
A grey-blue silence lies  
unmoving in the low, suburban streets.  
My ears are clear.  
My mind  
falls into waiting mode again.

*Elinor O'Connell*



# Take up thy canoe and live

*For the armchair adventurer or for those looking for an inspiring example, Judith Niemi and Barbara Wieser have compiled a book about canoeing in the wildernesses of North America.*

**RIVERS RUNNING FREE –  
Stories of Adventurous Women.**  
Edited by Judith Niemi and Barbara Wieser. Bergamot Books, 1987.

MY IDEA of the good life is to be clean, sitting in a comfortable chair, and doing nothing more physical than turning the pages of a good book. And so I have resisted reading this book for some time now. I've read rave reviews about it, AERL readers and other friends have recommended it. But really – a book about canoeing? Women who voluntarily spend days, weeks or months cold, wet, tormented by black flies and mosquitoes, and far from the presence of running water? (The kind that runs through pipes and bathroom fixtures I mean.)

But finally a review copy appeared in my mailbox (signed by Niemi, even). What could I do? Grudgingly I said OK, I'll put it in the next issue. Then I spent weeks glaring at the book. Two days before my copy deadline I started reading it. I had to force myself to put it down, about two-thirds of the way through. It was 2am. I hadn't even stopped reading to eat dinner yet.

As the editors write in their preface,

“

*The only real security is . . . the skill and humour and courage within, the ability to build your own fires and find your own peace*

”

“This is a book about adventurous and exploring impulses in women, about travelling in wild places by canoe. Many of these women have travelled great distances, but the real stories are the journeys

of mind and spirit.” These are stories about “canoeing as a way women have found their most adventurous, most free selves.” They speak of the canoe as “a craft well suited for serious travel, between our everyday lives and other parts of ourselves, other ways of being.”

And the stories are wonderful. They are by and about young, older and old women. About trips taken from the 1900s through the 80s. Most take place in the far reaches of northern wildernesses, but some are about “urban” rivers.

Although this is not a technical how-to book, maps of several rivers are included.

The re-emerging theme in these stories is women “getting away from the rules and the selves we’re supposed to be in society . . . about women finding joy and strength in each other.”

Joan Baril writes about the women she canoed with on a 1982 trip:

*We do not try to score points, nor hammer home a point of view. There is no thrust and parry talk, no desire to impress or solve all problems. We are women after all . . .*

Peg Cruikshank of San Francisco has a definition: “Whatever can be measured, weighed, compared, rated, counted, quantified in any way . . . that has importance to the masculine world.”

*The next evening as Mary is fishing,*

Illustration by VIVIENNE BOWE



*two men in a canoe glide past. “How many fish have you caught? How much do they weigh? How far did you paddle today?” Those of us within earshot fall on the ground in laughter.*

Judith Niemi writes: “Canoe conversation the other day: how for once we haven’t had to think about being political, how great it is to feel no opposition, to take ourselves for granted and live unselfconsciously.”

And Audrey Sutherland sums up the value of being able to confront a challenge on your own: “The only real security is not insurance or money or a job, not a house and furniture paid for, or a retirement fund, and never is it another person. It is the skill and humour and courage within, the ability to build your own fires and find your own peace.”

A fascinating book. It includes an annotated bibliography. (So how do I feel about canoeing and the outdoor life now? I’ll sit in my comfortable chair and read about it any time!)

Reprinted with permission from *Aunt Edna's Reading List*, a monthly review of feminist books. Sample copy available from 2002-H-29 Hunnewell St, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822, USA. Order the book from *Women in the Wilderness*, 566 Ottawa Ave, St Paul, MN 55107, USA. Tel. (612) 227 2284. \$US12.50 paper, add postage. You can also ask them to send info about slide programs and workshops, other books, and guided canoe trips for women in the US.

# NETWORK

## Ranger Section of the Girl Guides Association

Ranger Guides 14 - 18 years  
Rangers 18 - 25 years

The girls and young women of the Ranger Section challenge themselves in an eight point program, creating a great way of life. The program includes: fitness; service; creative ability; relationships with people; out of doors adventures (including canoeing, rafting, rowing and sailing); mental development; homecraft skills; and character development.

Contact the *Ranger Section of the Girl Guides Association* in your capital city.



## Earthwatch

A company of scholars and citizens working together. Its members sponsor research expeditions, sharing both the costs and the labours of field work.

Earthwatch supports the efforts of scholars to preserve the world's endangered species, explore the vast heritage of its peoples, and promote world health and international co-operation. Contact: *Earthwatch*

PO Box 403, Watertown, MA 02272, USA.

39 Lower Fort St, Sydney, NSW 2000, Aust.



## Maritime Economic History Group

Publishes a newsletter twice yearly, in

March and September. For further information contact *Prof LR Fischer, Maritime Studies Research Unit, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St Johns, Nfld. A1C 5S7, Canada.*



## The International Women's Writing Guild

An alliance and network for women connected to the written word. Contact *Hannelore Hahn, Executive Director and Founder, Box 810, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028, USA, 212-737-7536.*



## Tradeswomen, Inc.

A non-profit membership organisation for peer support, networking and advocacy for women in nontraditional, blue-collar jobs. Members receive Tradeswomen Magazine and Trade Trax newsletter. For further information contact: *TRADESWOMEN, INC., PO Box 40664, San Francisco, CA 94140, USA, 415-821-7334.*



## WISENET

(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.



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

## The Women's Maritime Association

An information and support network of seafaring women. Established in 1980, WMA is based in Seattle, Washington, with members from all over the United States. Our 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 meetings are held in Seattle.

For further information write to *Women's Maritime Association, Box # 743, 1916 Pike Place # 12, Seattle, WA 98101, USA.*



**Continued page 18**

## Classifieds

**Charterers, crew and schools:** Are there any women interested in women-only sailing adventures? Day, weekend, or weeklong? *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 in-

clude professional crew, as well as recreational boaters. In Sydney, for example, Ruth would like to organise regular events - sailing or simply meeting.

**Next sailing day** on Sydney Harbour will be on Sunday October 9, \$35. No previous experience in sailing is required. Contact *Sistership*, PO Box 1027, Crows Nest, NSW 2065, or phone Ruth (046) 26 6740. Book early: the last one filled fast.

**Floor space for rent:** Are you making your own sails or awnings? Floor space is available in Sydney suitable for lofting sails. The space is available for short term rentals. Call Judy on (02) 516 2487.

**Swap, sell or buy:** Do you have items that you wish to swap, sell or buy? Try placing a notice here in the classified section of *Sistership*, (046) 26 6740. Rates are 60c per word.

# NETWORK

## Marine Education Society of Australasia

*The Secretary, Julie Swartz, Marine Studies Centre, Weeroona Parade, Queenscliff, Vic 3225, Aust.*



## Australian Association for Maritime History

*Newsletter Editor, Vaughan Evans, 85 Fullers Rd, Chatswood, NSW 2067.*



## Dolphin Data Base

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. *DOLPHIN DATA BASE, P O Box 5657, Playa Del Rey, CA 90293-5657, USA, 213-301-1535.*



## Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women & the Military and Minerva's Bulletin Board

*Minerva* is a wholly independent enterprise. The editorial policy emphasises diversity. *Minerva* includes material from enlisted women, veterans, Red Cross and other civilian veterans, military spouses, peace activists, defense analysts and academics. Contact: *MINERVA, Linda Grant de Pauw, Editor and Publisher, 1101 S. Arlington Ridge Rd, #210, Arlington, VA 22202, USA, 703-892-4388.*



## Australian Maritime College

Has full-time courses from certificate to graduate diploma level which cover fisheries biology, port management and electronics, as well as the more traditional sea-going occupations. Contact: *The Admis-*

*sions Officer, Australian Maritime College, PO Box 986, Launceston, TAS 7250, Tel. (008)030 277 (toll free).*



## Greenpeace

*155 Pirie St, Adelaide, SA 5000, Aust. 1161 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009, USA. 2623 W. Fourth Ave, Vancouver, BC V6K 1P8, Canada.*



## Pacific Peace Fleet

*Contact PO Box 686, Marrickville, NSW 2204, Aust.*



## NSW Water Ski Association Ltd.

*Contact PO Box N145, Grosvenor St, Sydney, NSW, 2000, Tel. (02)27 5869.*



## Oceanic Research Foundation Ltd.

Founded in 1977 with the aims of promoting and encouraging study and research into maritime resources and environment. "Learning by adventure" is part of the philosophy, which emphasises small, privately-funded expeditions. The ORF makes their research vessel, the Dick Smith Explorer, available to university and museum researchers to reach "difficult" destinations. Contact *ORF, PO Box 247, Windsor, NSW 2756, Aust, Tel. (045)79 9254.*



## Women's Sport Promotion Unit

Women should have an equal opportunity to enjoy participation in sport, and the benefits that go with it. Special measures to stimulate change are needed to assist women. The key areas to be addressed are: the promotion of women's involvement in sport to raise awareness and encourage participation; more and better media cov-

erage of the training in relevant skills and involvement of women in decision making positions; greater needs of women in the design, building and upgrading of sports facilities; more effective sports programs for girls in schools; increased funding and sponsorship; and more research, provision of information for and about women in sport. *Active* is the Unit's newsletter, available from *Women's Sport Promotion Unit, Australian Sports Commission, PO Box 176, Canberra, ACT 2616, Tel. (062) 52 1111.*



## Outward Bound

Outward Bound was founded in Britain in 1941 by Dr Kurt Hahn, initially to train young British seamen to survive in demanding circumstances and subsequently to develop in all individuals "... an enterprising curiosity, undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, readiness for sensible self-denial and above all, compassion."

It was Kurt Hahn's conviction that adventure in the outdoors, guided by competent and thoughtful instructors could help develop tenacity, self-respect, consideration for others and a zest for life.

Today there are more than 30 Outward Bound schools in 17 countries. Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, is the world Patron and an enthusiastic supporter of Outward Bound.

Outward Bound Australia is an independent, non-profit organisation engaged in personal development through experiential and outdoor education.

Since 1956, over 90,000 participants from across Australia and overseas have successfully completed one of the many Outward Bound courses which operate from the National School near Canberra and seasonally from remote bases in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

Outward Bound says it "provides an opportunity to expand your capabilities, extend your limits, challenge your fears, experience the support of companions—all in spectacularly beautiful wilderness settings."



# 'The night of the turtles'

*Unpredictably, ponderously, great sea turtles make landfall on a St Lucia beach to lay their eggs. PAM POWELL and RUTH BOYDELL report on a turtle watch in which they took part.*

IN THE morning the sea and sand, seen from the back of the truck, are a bright glare, like ice, as we wind our way upwards. Salt on our skin, slightly sodden and dishevelled, we have a feeling of being at peace.

After a whole day in that state of not having had enough sleep, when one's perceptions seem to hold more clarity than usual, I recall the night's episodes in short sharp flashes - camera shots at night on a dark beach. We are walking, two women, along the beach, talking occasionally, and holding hands or linking arms, establishing contact as we cannot see each other, only our forms. We watch the sea, foam at the edge - a white streak - and hear the curl and roar. We laugh and talk subduedly or we are silent - until a dark shape moving out from the sea up the beach stops us. We crouch down and wait. Turtle mother. She looks immense, and her motion is like that of an animated cartoon. She appears to move across the sand in frames.

Later, many of us are crouched around her. She looks smaller now, but primeval still, surrounded by people with flashlights and notepads and cameras. Black, with mottled grey spots, some of her flippers are torn, possibly by shark teeth. This turtle digs her hole, her hind flippers move in an undulating rhythm - one then the other; the hole is deep and narrow. The eggs, when they are laid, drop out in groups of three or four or five; most are the size of squash balls, white and glistening with mucous, like hard-boiled hen's eggs with the shells peeled off. Some, the infertile eggs, are golfball and marble-sized, but there are fewer of these.



The St Lucia Naturalist Society has been trying to make turtle watches financially viable by inviting along a select group of tourists to participate. A fee entitles them to an ample supply of food, a tent, and a chance to witness a turtle laying. In return they help to pace the beach, record data and become involved in this

worthwhile cause. They won't, of course, be guaranteed to see turtles laying, but will have the opportunity to see a lovely and remote part of St Lucia.

Crispin D'Auvergne of the St Lucia Ministry of Agriculture relays information gleaned on these turtle watches to WATS II (Western Atlantic Turtle Symposium II) based in Miami. By introducing the turtle-watching program to the Naturalist Society, which has been operating the watches for several years now, he has been able to increase the number of people

dotting the way. We were headed away from the late afternoon sun to the East coast where the sea rolls and pounds with all the force of the Atlantic behind it.

Before dark we walked the mile long beach with Jim Sparks, the SLNS co-ordinator, to search for any recent nests, large hollowed areas above the high-water mark along the beach. Only two nests, noted on a previous week's visit, were in evidence. Jim then organised our group into three three-hour watches, to begin at 2100.

A "watch" consisted of quietly walking the length of the beach, in pairs, keeping to our own tracks and watching for any evidence of turtles and their tracks, in which case we were to signal the other pair on watch with a flashlight, so that they could alert the others back at camp.

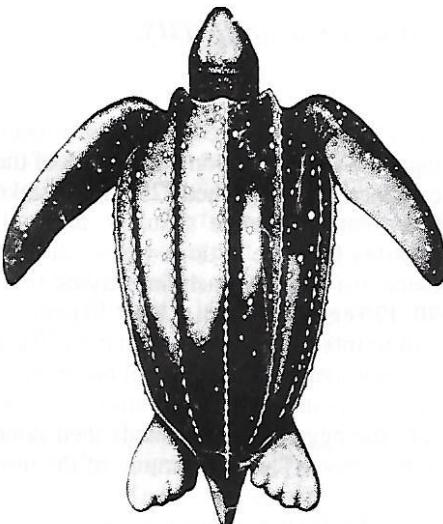
Our first night of turtle watching proved uneventful. We wondered whether the full moon was a deterrent to the turtles. However, our second excursion to Grande Anse was more rewarding.

We were awakened at midnight with the news that a turtle had just been spotted. Quickly but quietly, we stumbled along the beach. The turtle, just above high water, was making sweeping motions with her flippers. The noise of the viewers around her didn't appear to bother her as she proceeded with her task. On close inspection she was found to be the same turtle which was spotted and tagged four weeks earlier, after laying her first eggs of the season.

As it was now our watch, we left the turtle before she laid her 89 eggs, with the hope of sighting another turtle at the southern end of the beach. One length: nothing. But as we turned back we thought we saw a dark shape emerging from the surf. We squatted low and waited, but, if it had indeed been a turtle, she had vanished.

Further still along the beach we saw another large dark shape, this time moving up the sand. We waited until she stopped before one of us ran to notify the others who were still occupied with observing

*Continued page 20*



**The Leatherback turtle**

involved, thus making more regular watches possible. Watches have been conducted only on weekends because of lack of financial and human resources.



We joined the group on two occasions. We travelled in a four-wheel drive pickup over winding and bumpy backroads, past Union and the church high on the hill in Babonneau, through pastureland and tiny villages with staring children, rum shops

# The night of the turtles

From page 19

and measuring the first turtle. It was about 0115 – the entire egg laying process, including the turtle's arduous journey along the sand, takes one-and-a-half to two hours.

We waited approximately 15 minutes for "our" turtle to settle, as apparently turtles will not lay if disturbed early in the nesting procedure. Everyone then moved in closer to watch the nest-digging and egg-laying. Alternating her back flippers, the turtle scooped away sand to form a narrow hole about half a metre deep. The task was perfectly executed despite a badly damaged left flipper. She appeared to have survived several possible shark attacks, as her foreflippers were maimed as well, and a more recent 15cm gash could be seen on her neck.

We were impressed by her determination. The odds are against both her and the many eggs she will have laid in her lifetime. Is it sheer instinct which brings these reptiles back to the same beach year after year?



The turtle grunts and strains. We notice the women in the group squat near her, as if somehow we too are taking part, know what this course of events is about, the driven instinct to create and bear young. The hard work involved. The will to survive. The turtle's eyes are oozing mucous – tears? I resent the light, the camera flashes, and I keep my head low to the sand as I watch the turtle's ponderous movements, covering her eggs with the sand she sweeps over them, keeping them safe from harm. I am reminded as she does this of the angel patterns we made as children, lying in the snow on our backs.

Angel patterns. Turtle wings. Her sweeping motions remind me of these – and in the morning, hours after she's slipped back into the sea, I am amazed by the size of her tracks.



FOUR species of turtles are found on or near St Lucia in the West Indies: the Hawksbill, Green, Loggerhead and Leatherback (*Dermochelys Coriacea*). All are endangered species.

Turtles are exploited for various reasons: Green turtles for meat, Hawksbill for

the carapace (made into jewellery and souvenirs); the eggs of all of the turtles are considered both an aphrodisiac and a delicacy. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) forbids any trade of turtle or turtle products in St Lucia or in any CITES-participating country.

At present in St Lucia, there is a closed season on turtles and turtle eggs from May 1 through to August 31, which is the laying season. There is also a law which protects turtles smaller than about 7kg. Although these laws exist, they are not easily enforced. The St Lucian government would like to make the laws stricter in future.

Leatherbacks are the largest turtles in



*After the eggs are hatched, the tiny turtles are preyed upon . . . Only one in 8,000 survives to maturity.*



the world. The greatest one to have been tagged was 180cm along the length of the carapace, and it weighed 725kg. They take four years to mature sexually, and will possibly lay once in three years – at least twice in a season – each time laying from 70–120 eggs (of which at least 30 per cent will be infertile). There is perhaps a 70 per cent survival rate at hatching; however, if the nest is disturbed at all after 24 hours (i.e. the eggs are disoriented) then none will survive. The temperature of the nest may determine the sex of the hatchlings, as all turtles from one nest emerge the same sex.

After the eggs are hatched, the tiny turtles are preyed upon by night herons and ghost crabs; in the sea they are attacked by sharks, in danger of being caught in fishing nets, damaged by boat propellers, as well as deliberate exploitation by humans. Only one in 8,000 survives to maturity!

The Leatherback nests on large "high energy" (surf) beaches. They are known to have the widest geographical range of any reptile in the world. These turtles nest in Surinam, the Pacific, Africa, and even Australia.

Grande Anse, in St Lucia, is considered the major nesting beach of the Eastern Caribbean.

## BARGAIN!

Sistership T-shirts and sweatshirts are for sale again after stocks sold out last month.

For only \$A18 (plus \$A2 P&P within Australia), you can purchase an attractive, pure cotton shirt with knitted button-up collar and the distinctive Sistership logo printed on the breast-pocket.

Colours are navy, silver-grey, turquoise, melon (salmon) and grape (mauve).

Sistership sweatshirts are also available in various colours for a mere \$A20 plus postage.

The sweatshirts have the Sistership logo emblazoned on the chest – they look superb!

Don't miss out on an excellent and useful bargain – send your order to Sistership today.

Clip the coupon on the inside back cover of this issue. But be quick! Stocks run out fast.

### From page 11

competition between enlisted men and women for leadership positions at sea.

The older vessels, 82-foot and 95-foot cutters, are commanded by senior enlisted officers-in-charge. These are being replaced by 110-footers, commanded by lieutenants. Although this policy may change as more women are entering the senior enlisted ranks, competition for the enlisted leadership positions at sea is sure to remain keen.

Women have only been entering as boatswain's mate, machinery technician and quartermaster ratings for 12 years. The Coast Guard still has trouble attracting women to non-traditional ratings. Of 1,250 women petty officers, only 20 per cent are in the engineering/hull or deck/ordinance. Furthermore, only 30 per cent of women petty officers in seagoing ratings are actually assigned to sea duty. And, because of bunking arrangements, the Coast Guard assigns women to sea in units of 10. As a consequence, women are sometimes kept from sea duty not because of a shortage of bunks but because of a shortage of women in non-traditional ratings to fill a berthing area.

### A US investigation of abuse of women in the maritime industry

(From the Women's Maritime Association)

The US General Accounting Office Investigation into the extent of sexual harassment, assault and rape in the maritime industry ended in April, this year. The investigation focused on the Northwest region of the USA, and lasted less than two months.

The investigators attempted to determine the number of women currently and formerly employed in the maritime industry, obtain data on the extent of harassment and violence against women, determine the applicable civil, criminal and maritime laws and regulations, obtain information about procedures of complaint and about the monitoring and educational efforts of employers.

Many women have left the maritime industry because of violence against them or injury caused by intentional disregard for their job descriptions and safety.

The Women's Maritime Association (WMA) has expressed concern that the investigation was too limited adequately to determine the extent of the problems women face when they are isolated, often in hostile environments, without support

or legal redress. The Association has asked that the investigation be continued and expanded to all areas of the United States.

WMA requests that women in the maritime industry who have not yet written down the types of harassment or assault experienced in their work environment please consider the importance and rarity of opportunities for maritime women to have their voices heard and effect changes. WMA will keep statements on file until the investigation is extended. Statements may be submitted anonymously and employers will not be contacted.

For further information contact WMA, Box #743, 1916 Pike Place #12, Seattle, WA 98101, USA.

In Australia please send any statements of this nature to *Sistership*, making it clear the material is not for publication. *Sistership* will collect and file submissions, and will approach the government if we cannot gain satisfaction through the appropriate unions.

### St Elmo's Fire

This is the electrical phenomenon usually seen on shipboard, which was formerly sacred to Helen, the moon-goddess, or else to Hermes, god of magic. It is a static discharge from points such as masts and spars of a ship.

According to some sea stories, if one flame appears, it is Helen, who presages bad weather; if two flames appear, they are Helen's brothers Castor and Pollux, who indicate that the weather will clear. Other

names for the phenomenon are Corposant and St Anne's Light.

St Elmo was entirely mythical. It was claimed that he died of having his intestines wound out of his body onto a windlass; therefore his symbol in sacred art was a windlass. Through this tenuous link, he became the patron saint of sailors. But since he probably never existed at all, the point is only academic.

— from *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets*, edited by Barbara G. Walker (Harper and Row).

'Australians and the Sea' to be held in Sydney in October 1988. Contact *Australian Association for Maritime History*, c/o Vaughan Evans, 85 Fullers Rd, Chatswood, NSW 2067.

The International Commission for Maritime History Conference: 'Food for the World; Maritime Trade and Shipping of Foodstuffs' is the proposed theme for the conference to be held in Madrid, Spain, in 1990.

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.

Seal Watch 88 is a guided expedition to  
Continued page 23



SAILING LESSON #28: FINE REACH

Cartoon by SUSAN NICHOLLS

**From page 2**

combat units but serve exclusively on shore-based establishments; however, it is anticipated that in coming years the members of KMK may secure equality with their male colleagues which may result in their becoming part of a ship's company within Naval Home Guard.

All members of KMK must undergo basic training; this is followed by advanced training in the following fields of specialisation:

- Staff and Headquarters duties
- Operation Room duties
- Communications
- Logistics
- Medical services
- NBC services
- Transport services
- Catering
- Naval Control of Shipping

Our badge, which is composed of a piece of a ship's wheel; the letters K M (Kvinde-lig Mariner); the Venus symbol; and the lower part of an anchor; symbolises Ener-

getic Female Marines (Energiske Kvindelige Marinere).

**Gurli Vido**  
**Kvindeligt Marinekorps, Denmark.**

Congratulations on a great magazine and an exciting concept.

The Girl Guides Association (NSW), would like to bring to your attention the existence of our Water Activities Centre, known as RTS (Ranger Training Ship) Tingira, which is situated in Hen and Chicken Bay at Cabarita.

Here we provide a variety of craft and training courses for our members, aged from seven upwards, to learn to canoe, sail or row, and for leisure boating.

Members of the Ranger Section, aged from 15 to 25, assist in many ways with training and maintenance of boats, and also have fun just mucking around in boats.

We are proud that our Centre is one of very few available solely for girls and women.

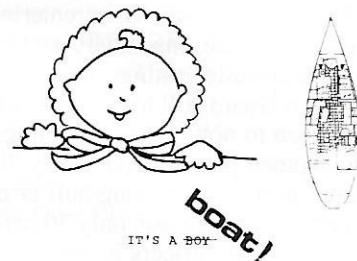
However, our excellent facility is under-utilised, and we would like to at-

tract more members, especially in the 15 to 25 age group.

We would be delighted if you would feature RTS Tingira in a future edition of *Sistership*.

**Sue Conde**  
**Ranger Adviser, Sydney, NSW,**  
**Aust.**

*Watch future issues of Sistership for an article on RTS Tingira and ranger training activities in other States - Editor*



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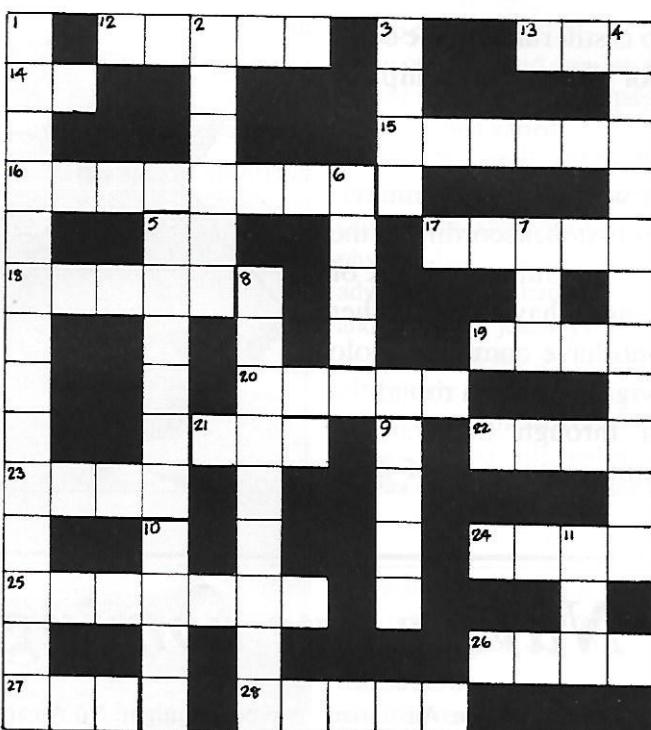
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**SISTERSHIP SPECIAL:** Giant, semi-cryptic, not-very-hard crossword

## **CLUES (mostly derived from the Macquarie Thesaurus)**

Across:

5. The answer to the question, "Do you borrow your copy of Sistership instead of subscribing yourself?"
12. A way in for boats and water
13. Nickname for a rock near Spain, and a sail too.
14. Westward, laughingly
15. No jacket required sailing through one of these
16. Surely not a spelling mistake – it means what it says
17. The sea's preservative
18. An emergency noise now, but once an irresistible woman
19. A balanced little tide
20. Bejasus, Paddy, don't go and jump in this – sail on it instead
21. Angry discussion concerning boat propulsion
22. Could be dreary if you're boating on a river when one comes along
23. It's shaken by the wind biblically and was useful to prehistoric mariners
24. Characteristic nomenclature in England's Lake District
25. This Greek belongs to the open sea
26. The cause of joy, terror, excitement and, mainly, propulsion on a yacht
27. The answer to the question, "Do you subscribe to Sistership?"
28. One of the finest, most elegant, most satisfying, most thrilling vehicles for getting across water ever devised, and a



good Scrabble word, too

Down;

1. This Greek studies the sea
2. Spike, Peter or Harry inside the reef of Los Angeles
3. Dana spent two years before one
4. It's round and deep, but you can't float your rubber duck in it
5. Sea nymph – or north before the subconscious self
6. Probably more fun to sail on than to go and jump in, old trout (see 20 across)
7. All boats should be equipped with a

box for this substance.

8. This kind of love is not good for your body, but understandable in a sea-going woman
9. Part of a goodbye, and a lot of moving water
10. This won't get you anywhere without the answer to clue 26 across
11. Can be done before 26 across, and also to the postbox to pick up your subscription copy of *Sistership*.

Created, with apologies to all, by Susan Nicholls. **SOLUTION NEXT ISSUE!**

## *Bosun's Locker*

From page 21

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*.

the sun. Don't risk it. Wear a hat and sunglasses to minimise the danger.

## Women scientists play a key role in Greenpeace Antarctic base

Greenpeace has established a base in the Antarctic to give it the credentials to be involved in Treaty meetings about the area's future. To date, two four-member teams have been there, the first successfully overwintering and the second hoping to do so this year. Three of the people in the teams have been research scientists, the others being doctors, technicians, radio

operators and mechanics; two of the team members have been women and both were research scientists.

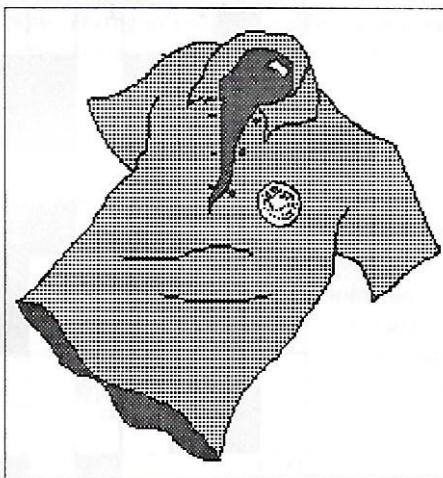
Gudrun Gaudin was in the first team and Sabine Schmidt is in the second. Their work has involved studies of coastal fish and plankton, observation of local wildlife and monitoring pollution and other human impacts on the Antarctic environment.



## COMPETITION

Sistership is still running the competition for three Sistership T-shirts.

Acknowledging that Kay Cottee is the first woman to circumnavigate solo *non-stop*, according to the rules set by the Guinness Book of Records, there have been other women who have completed solo circumnavigations, both round the Horn and through the Panama Canal. Name some or all of them



and you could be the winner of a Sistership T-shirt. T-shirts will be sent to the three people naming the most female solo circumnavigators. The closing date has been extended to October 1, 1988.

Send your answers (with any background information on the circumnavigators, if you have it) with your T-shirt size, name and address, to Sistership, PO Box 1027, Crows Nest, NSW 2000, Australia.

## *The Navies are coming . . .*

THE LATEST event on the Australian Government Bicentennial diary is a massive Naval Salute which will include 61 warships from some 13 nations.

Included in visiting fleets are seven ships capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Although it is British and US policy never to inform host nations of what weapons are on board, the ships are supposedly permanently ready for a wartime situation. The cargos of these ships are likely to include a variety of nuclear depth charges, strike bombs and Tomahawk long-range cruise missiles.

The warships will be visiting many Australian ports during September and October.

The Sydney Peace Squadron has been organising protests on Sydney Harbour for many years. It is committed to a policy of non-violent action to highlight the dangers of nuclear armament.

Members of the squadron began protests in August with a boat cavalcade through the city to Naval Headquarters. Other action planned includes a rally and concert at the Domain on September 24, which also begins a continuous vigil at Mrs Macquarie's Chair. Protests will be organised on and around the Harbour on September 26-27 when the nuclear-armed ships start to arrive.

Some of the very limited information which is available on nuclear weapons accidents shows that the US Navy had 381 nuclear weapons accidents between 1965 and 1976. This is an average of more than

one per fortnight. No Australian port has adequate, if any, safety plans for a radioactive spill which could result from an accident.

In early September, in spite of a Seamen's Union strike, the USS Berkeley entered the port of Darwin without the assistance of tug boats. The USS Brewton, carrying three nuclear missiles, nearly ran aground when it followed the same dangerous policy in Townsville two months ago. The Seamen's Union sent a tug to help in the interests of public safety. There has also been an incident off Cairns in early September when a US warship collided with a commercial charter vessel.



**Come on a warship tour.** These will be open to the public on October 2-3 from 1300-1500hrs. Peace Squadron tour guides will point out interesting features and give amazing information; unfortunately we can't guarantee that they (and maybe you) will not be escorted off the ships under armed guard: such is the respect that our visitors have for free speech, which they claim to be here defending.

*Contact:*

Sydney Peace Squadron  
498 King Street  
Newtown NSW 2042  
Tel.: (02) 519 7465  
Postal address: GPO Box 4695, Sydney  
NSW 2001, Australia.

## ON THE HORIZON

**In Sistership's next issue:**

**Below Decks** – an account by Amanda Keast of life on a cruise ship.

Chalice Roughan describes her introduction to sailing Tasars.

A biography of Rachel Carson, marine scientist and conservationist, by Thea Stanley Hughes.

More poetry by Elinor O'Connell

Wavelength – letters to Sistership



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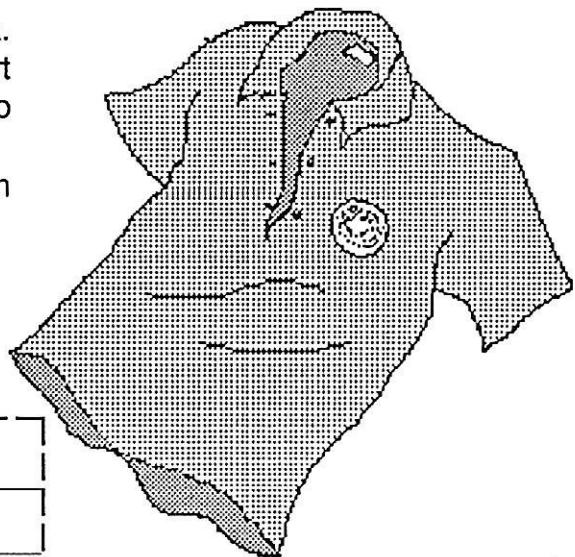
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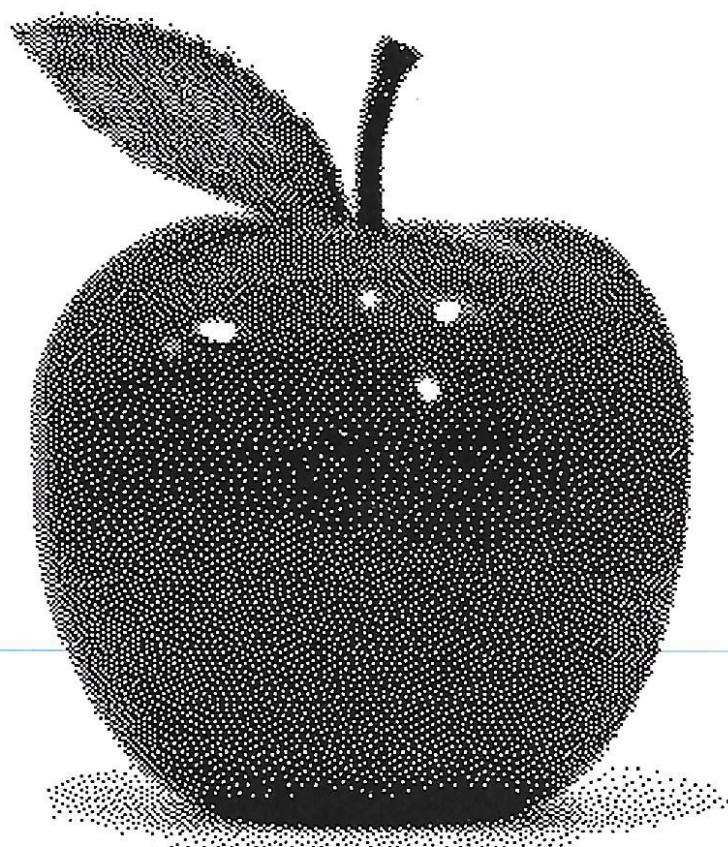
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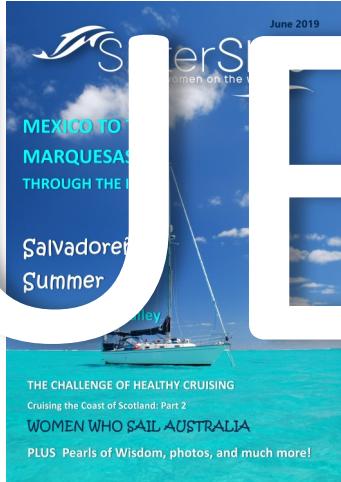
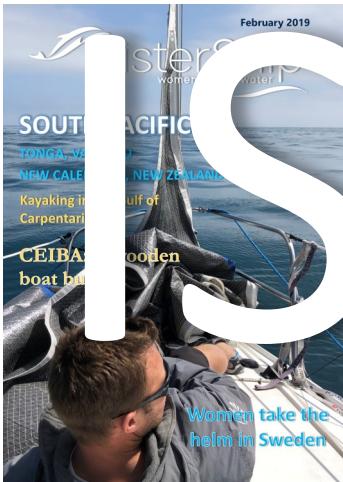
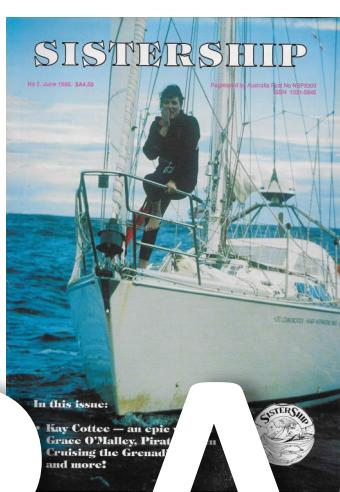
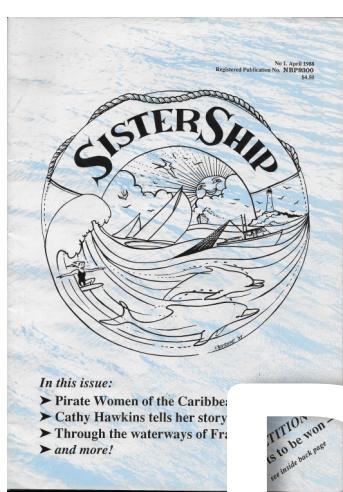
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