

Letters to the Editor

157 East Terrace
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Whalers Bay or Walers Bay?

Mr M deN Lucas once told me that the bay on Thistle Island should be spelt 'Walers Bay' after the horses bred on the island for the Indian Army. They were shipped from the Bay. The term 'Walers' referred to the original horses sent from New South Wales.

Is there any truth in this idea?

Colin Steele Scott

Oxford English Dictionary defines Waler as 'A horse imported from Australia, especially from New South Wales. Also, a type of light Australian horse.' The first citation is 1849.

Matthew Hinders first allocated the name Uncertain Island and then changed it to Thistle's Island after the Catastrophe. In neither his Rough Log or Fair Log (from which he compiled his narrative) does he name any other feature on the island, although he is usually credited with naming Snug Cove and Observatory Point. His outline of the island in both rough and faircharts is incomplete, and does not extend down the eastern side as far as Whalers Bay.

Australia Pilot describes and names Whalers Bay and the same spelling is used on the 1:50 000 Topographic Map THISTLE Pt 6128-III & Pt 6127-IV of the SA Department of Lands.

Between Observatory and Waterhouse Points the names of eastern coastal features are Shag Point, Neverest Hill, Crawford Ruins, Crawford Beach, Sunrise Cliffs, Nautilus Beach, Ariel Lookout, Trevally Point, Echo Valley, Whalers Bay, Cosy Cottage, Horny Point, Marble Bay, Hecla Cove, Osprey Point, Loot Bay, Waterhouse Bay, and Peet Point.

These names were all gazetted by the Geographical Names Board, after consultation with Mr Theo Modra, then owner of the Island. They are thus official, but that does not confirm what might have been an alternative or original spelling. It is formal policy in South Australia to omit apostrophes in all official names.

Any further information would be appreciated. — Ed.

Slipping

Thank you, Sam and Phil, for your enthusiasm and excellent service when slipping *Gemini* early in May.

It is good to know that this most important facility of the Squadron is in good hands.

Medeleine and David Searle

Broken Mast!

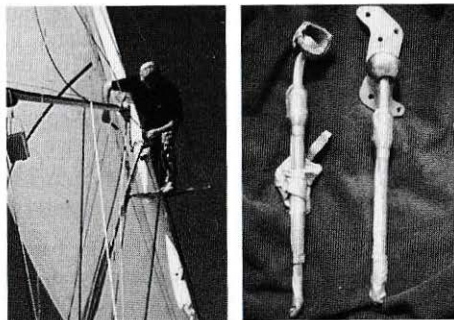
38 Marlborough Road
Westbourne Park SA 5041 [Photographs 15 & 16]

1 April 1998

The breaking of *Helsal II*'s mast in the Port Lincoln race in mild conditions has created much interest as to the 'whys and wherefores' of what happened.

What broke was the stainless steel ball which held the fitting of the upper shroud, and when this happened the mast folded at the upper spreader. The problem that we then confronted was how to get rid of the mainsail, as all the halyards were very firmly held at the mast break. The upper section of the mast was flapping about wildly, even in a breeze of only 15 knots. To capture and secure this was quite a hazardous operation. What it would have been like in say 30 to 40 knot winds in the open sea doesn't bear contemplating.

All this happened in the sheltered waters of Port Lincoln, just near Fanny Point and only two miles from the Lincoln Cove wharf, where help was immediately available. Most fortuitously, a young professional rigger from *Future Shock* offered his services. He went aloft bare-footed like a monkey to cut the mainsail along the luff rope, which was an expensive way (but the only one) to get things under control.



Left: Inspecting the trauma to *Helsal II*.

Right: The long plate lives inside the mast, and is secured by screws from the outside. External examination did not reveal any flaw where what I call the ball is held inside the mast. (Keith Flint)

Through the efforts of the Bascombe brothers a large crane was soon on the scene, and the mast was lifted out without any trouble. A working party on the Sunday morning removed all the standing and running rigging and prepared the yacht to return to the Squadron under motor.

Everyone who has seen the faulty fitting shares my amazement as to why the failure should occur in ideal conditions in Port Lincoln, instead of in the hard and sometimes gale-force conditions of the Sydney-Hobart race and associated delivery trips, on which such an accident could have caused loss of the vessel and put the lives of the crew in jeopardy.

As I have experienced some very narrow squeaks, both on land and sea, in my lifetime I am certain that someone 'aloft' takes care of me, and I am very grateful for it.

Unfortunately, we will be out of racing for some time, but *Helsal II* will be back as soon as possible. In the meantime, if any readers have any bright ideas as to how to control a madly flapping mainsail still attached to the mast in, say 40 knots of wind and with heavy seas, not too far off a rocky lee shore, I would be pleased to hear from them.

Keith Flint

Showers and Rain

Puzzled by the forecast distinctions between 'rain' and 'showers' we sought expert advice. — Ed.

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'Showers' or 'rain' is classified according to the type of cloud which the moisture precipitates from. Showers are associated with cumulus or cellular type clouds (generally associated with convection processes) — these clouds can be recognised by their cauliflower shapes. Rain on the other hand is associated with broadscale uplift, and generally falls out of stratiform or layer-like cloud formations.

When we say intermittent rain, we mean that the precipitation is falling out of stratiform (layer) cloud. If there is a large quantity of

moisture available in the cloud layer/s (ie, thick, heavy layer clouds) we would expect persistent or even heavy rainfall. However, if the stratiform cloud is not as 'moisture-rich' then we may forecast intermittent rain or light rain.

Whether the forecast is for 'a few showers' or 'frequent showers', depends on the vertical development of the cellular cloud/s and/or the number of clouds likely to develop or move over an area.

Graham de Hoedt

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Oil Rig

We have an island in Gulf of St Vincent at last! About 10 nm NW (S 34°41'/E 138°19') of the Outer Harbour breakwater a drill platform has been erected. What a nice reason to take *Camelot* for a spin on a lovely autumn day. Quite a few sail boats were already on their way in calm seas and a light breeze. A note for caution: almost on the direct course to the platform, about 3.7 nm before reaching the new destination, we found a chain of blue marker buoys in the water (approximately S 34°43.5'/E138°22'). It might be a good idea to consult the latest NOTAMs to check for any current restrictions.

Disabled Carparks

Given the Squadron's new image as a friendly and caring club, it would be nice if we could follow Australian Standard AS 2890.1-1993, App. C and provide the recommended level of disabled parking spaces. Considering the size of the total car parking area, I cannot see a problem with setting aside a couple of spaces close to the facilities on either side of the basin.

By the end of the day a few extra metres can feel like an extra mile for a disabled person. The insufficient width of the average parking space is another common problem for people with disabilities; it would only take a brush, some paint and good will to fix it!

Bernie Matzat MIEAust, CPEng Dipl-Ing TH (FRC)