

By Lloyd Cushway

Quarante-deux and Silver Gull cruise in company*Quarante-deux arriving at Edithburgh*

OUR cruise was so titled because there was a week between Twilight races with no racing scheduled on the Saturday in between. The plan was to come south along the western shore of Gulf of St Vincent from Ardrossan, with *Quarante-deux* (Lloyd Cushway) and *Silver Gull* (Rob Hutson) proceeding in company. Among the crews the trip was also known as 'a pub crawl around the gulf'.

An early start at 0500 hrs on the Thursday morning was necessary so that we would arrive at Ardrossan at the top of the tide for 'elevenses' if there was no wind. This was exactly the situation because we motored all the way. On the agenda was to explore the possibility of coming alongside the town jetty. However, Coast Guard Ardrossan insisted on guiding us to the anchorage because of the extent of shallows near the jetty. As it was, we anchored closer in towards the launching ramp than directed, there being enough depth at the time we left for Black Point. **Score at Ardrossan: coffee and cake 1, pubs 1 of 2.**

The next day it was more motoring than sailing to Black Point. We anchored in the south-west corner of Port Alfred and dinghied ashore to join *Silver Gull* for a beach barbecue.

On Friday, after exercise ashore, we made an easy departure for Port Julia, anchoring there in 2.5 m in a falling tide and about 300 m off the jetty. Just at that time, Squadron member Steve Lewis telephoned from on shore and advised that he had laid the mooring we had just passed for *Odette*, and that it would be suitable for *Silver Gull*. By the time lunch was over a S-SE sea breeze, as it is for these parts, had built up, giving a good sail to our marina berths booked at

*Rob Hutson at Black Point*

Port Vincent. En route, we discovered that North Spit does indeed go well to the east of the beacon, with the depth alarm sounding several times. It was a good thing that we had telephoned ahead to the Ventnor Hotel because we only just got in on the first sitting with a group of seven. **Score at Port Vincent: pubs 1 of 1. Chill Out Café next morning.**

Fishing was the top priority for Saturday because one or two sushi meals had been planned. Eventually we had enough fish to feed seven. There were many yachts on moorings and at anchor in Oyster Bay so we anchored about 400 m out from the launching ramp in 2.1 m at the bottom of the tide. *Silver Gull* rafted up for happy hour and the Japanese style evening meal of sushi, sashimi, nori maki, pickles and of course, sake. Wind from the NE was forecast so *Silver Gull* went in and tied up inside the L-head at the launching ramp, an ideal spot for trailer sailers.

On Sunday we went ashore for coffee in the morning, with a pub visit pending. Remember this was the very hot day in Adelaide but not so bad out on the water with wind N 5-10 kts. More fish were needed, so we chose a small bay 0.4 nm north of Klein Point. This was fortunate indeed because, on approach, the anchor

*Long boat in short berth at Port Vincent*

had been rigged for dropping, the jib had been furled and the main sail prepared for dropping into the lazy jacks. Right then, the wind changed to NW gusting 25 kts. Because we were only a few hundred metres off the windward shore, the short fetch across the water gave very little warning of the approaching change. Meanwhile, *Silver Gull* was well to seaward on a course for Troubridge Island Spit post. When the wind reached them, a structural weakness in the boat was revealed. While we lunched in relative shelter, we could see the silos at Port Giles disappearing into the dust coming off the limestone works at Klein Point. Departing our anchorage fishless, we learnt on the radio that *Silver Gull* had altered course to the Squadron moorings at Edithburgh. We had planned to use *Silver Gull* as a pathfinder to what appears to be a channel from the Troubridge Island Spit post going in a generally SW direction across Troubridge Shoals towards the northern-most starboard channel marker in Sultana Passage. By now the weather was overcast with too much wind, so we joined *Silver Gull* at the moorings. It was still quite warm and humid so a swim was very refreshing. Back on the boat I happened to notice a text message from my daughter Naomi. It showed a photo taken that day of a white pointer shark in Sultana Bay!

The issue with *Silver Gull* was that the top trapezoidal-shaped frame on the transom that carried the top rudder pintle had cracked. That meant temporary repairs with plenty of lashings. The pasta marinara meal that night turned into pasta whatever-you-could-find. Normally it blows a lot in Edithburgh but that night it was so calm that many dinghies were out dabbling for garfish.

By Monday morning the wind was up again S 10-15 kts so we moved *Quarante-deux* into the lee of the launching ramp breakwater to dinghy ashore for coffee. **Score at Edithburgh: pubs zero out of 2 (too early).** At this time, radio traffic through VMR American River had two pieces of information that attracted our attention. Firstly, reports of 30 kt winds around KI and secondly, asking vessels to keep a lookout for a 38 ft catamaran that had broken free in Boxing Bay with no crew on board! The 30 kt wind found us later at Stansbury, but the story about the catamaran remains a mystery.

The plan originally had been to sail to Seaclyff but given the weather it was deemed inadvisable to test the repairs to *Silver Gull's* steering to that extent. This was a wise move because yet another crack developed on the return to Stansbury, now absent of any yachts. Again, booking ahead for the Dalrymple Hotel, we only just managed to get one of the last two tables for the first sitting in the marquee out the back. We gave *Silver Gull* a head start from Edithburgh and we both rounded South Spit together, just as the rain front arrived. This was the rain that later caused flooding in Adelaide. *Silver Gull* went into the launching ramp and we went on

*Beach barbecue at Black Point.*

I-r: Mal Smith, Steve Richardson, Lloyd Cushway, Mark Herriott, Mark (Rowdy) Watts and Rob Hutson

to the southern-most Squadron mooring. Rain Radar showed that the weather would clear before evening. Rob, with incredible help from the local garage man, was able to get some steel bent and drilled for bolting onto the cracked aluminium frame on *Silver Gull*.

Tuesday was an early start with *Silver Gull* off first. To more or less keep station with *Silver Gull*, we had only a double-reefed main on *Quarante-deux*, sometimes with No 2 jib unfurled. Nevertheless, passage time to Outer Harbor entrance was five hours. As a final word on the repair, the frame had a fibreglass step screwed on top. Cracks started to appear around the screw holes, so duct tape was applied. Not only is this an illustration of 'If it moves and it shouldn't, then use duct tape etc....' but as Rob observed, "You couldn't see the cracks anymore."





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