

Youth Trophy Award Winners

Cruising Committee member Barry Worrall has provided the following short history of the Youth Trophy.

"The trophy was donated in 1984 by Eric Mack to recognise and reward personal achievement in cruising by a member of any of SA's sailing clubs. The establishment of the award coincided with the setting up of our Squadron Cruising Committee, which remains the guardians of the award.

The name of the Trophy honours and remembers the remarkable 16 year global cruising experience of Alan Quigley in his Randall 35ft sloop *Youth*. He began building *Youth* about 1958, when he was 21. (A great fan of Joseph Conrad's, he named his new boat after one of Conrad's short stories)

Alan began his epic cruise at the Squadron on Easter Sunday 1965. He returned on Easter Sunday 1981, with *Youth* a little slimmer than when she had departed, having been crushed between a wharf and a 10000 ton freighter in the Canary Islands a couple of years previously."

East Coast Adventures Aboard *Margarita*

Part 1 Adelaide to the Whitsundays
Rick and Gillian Baker

Youth Trophy winners Rick and Gill Baker built their ketch *Margarita* over a 13-year period, then sailed her to Sydney where they lived on board. On retirement, they headed for the Whitsundays, and spent nine seasons exploring North Queensland. In July this year they were awarded the Youth Trophy for their achievements. Here they describe how *Margarita* was constructed and eventually arrived in the Whitsundays.

The Building of *Margarita*

Gillian and I had often discussed the idea of extended cruising in a vessel with plenty of room, large enough to carry supplies for long periods. In 1980, we set about building a Bruce Roberts design, the Roberts 53, using fibreglass foam sandwich technique.



In April 1993, the hull was turned over and the timber plug removed to enable interior glassing.

The first step was to build a male mould out of timber, then sew on sheets of the core material, Airex foam. Below the waterline we used rigid polyurethane foam, to be scraped out later leaving solid GRP. After the exterior glassing was finished and faired off, the hull was turned over and interior layers of glass added, then 14 solid floors glassed in down to the bottom of the keel. Bulkheads, deck beams and a plywood deck followed. We moved the hull to Beswick's Boatyard on the Port River where the lead ballast was glassed in. Addition of engine beds, cabin sole and completion of the cockpit left the hull at lock-up stage.

I was then offered a job in Sydney which was too good to refuse, so we engaged the services of a shipwright for the interior fit-out in teak. The wiring, motor and propeller shaft were professionally installed. I was able to add most of the deck hardware and fittings before the hull was painted and antifouled.

We launched on December 4 1993, with about 70 people at 7am on a chilly morning to witness the event. All went smoothly and we entertained these good people to a breakfast of bacon and eggs, champagne and scotch!

We continued to ready her for her maiden voyage, to Sydney. Rigging her as a cutter-rigged ketch, the masts were stepped, instruments installed, life raft and other safety gear added. We will always be grateful to our friends who assisted so much throughout the project, particularly at this busy time.

The Maiden Voyage of *Margarita*

Time constraints prevented a shakedown cruise and eventually we departed two days behind schedule with a crew of six; Gillian and myself, friends Ran Lelant and Keith Cropley, together with Mike and Gay Lewis, who had extensive cruising experience.



Running towards Wilson's Promontory in 30-knot winds.

We left Outer Harbor late afternoon on 29th December 1993. The wind became light during the evening and we motor-sailed to Backstairs Passage and kept going. The day brought with it the most amazing display of dolphins coming towards us from every point in the compass, leaping out of the water. We had good breezes during the day, but they dropped out completely at night, leaving us rolling with the southern ocean swell. Daylight on New Year's Day found us a few miles west of Portland and revealed that two thirds of the slugs on the mainsail had broken due to slatting, leaving only one third of the sail attached at the top of the mast! We put into Portland for repairs, where Ted, an old friend of Mike's, was a great help.

We left that afternoon, heading for Refuge Cove on Wilson's Promontory. A strong westerly change came in during the night and we ran under Yankee headsail only for 36 hours. Arriving at this beautiful Cove about mid-morning, we all had showers and a delicious hot meal, then slept for 15 hours. Early next morning, we headed towards the Bass Strait oilfields, which we passed through at night. The remainder of the trip proved uneventful apart from being hit by a 50-knot squall as we sailed under smoke from the huge bushfires engulfing New South Wales.

We entered Sydney Harbour on the morning of the ninth day after leaving Adelaide. Passing through the Spit Bridge into Middle Harbour, we headed to Cammeray Marina where *Margarita's* home was to be a swing mooring for the next five and a half years.

Cruising From Cammeray

We loved sailing on Sydney Harbour and had enjoyable outings to the Sydney Fish Market at Blackwattle Bay. Middle Harbour was superb, with its many sheltered bays surrounded by national park, right in the middle of the metropolitan area. We had many excursions to Broken Bay, exploring the beautiful sheltered anchorages of Pittwater and the Hawkesbury area. Twice we sailed to Port Stephens, some 70 nautical miles north. There we discovered Fame Cove, an almost land-locked bay in the national park, complete with osprey colony and dolphins.

We joined the Coastal Cruising Club of Australia where we met many people and gained much advice on cruising further up the east coast. We moved on board as a good way of saving rent and boosting the cruising kitty. There was still much interior work to be done, but we somehow managed to finish most of it over the next three and a half years before we retired.

Our aim at this stage was to cruise to North Queensland and spend several seasons based in the Whitsunday Islands. For ease of handling we installed a headsail furler, autopilot and electric anchor windlass. We turned the ice-box into a 12 volt refrigerator and installed solar panels to keep the batteries charged to run the fridge. After a hectic round of farewell parties, we were ready to leave Cammeray on 17 April, 1999. We planned to cruise most of the way in company with our friends Joan and Trevor on *Been-A-Long*.

North to the Whitsundays

We departed Sydney Harbour and picked up a mooring in the Hawkesbury in time to watch a huge thunderstorm from the cockpit. The following evening we left in company with *Been-A-Long* for an overnight trip to Port Stephens. While there, we experienced two East Coast lows, during which the port was closed because of 50 knot winds with thunderstorms and hail. We were held up for two weeks before we could leave for Coffs Harbour. At one stage on this leg, we got caught in the East Coast Current and made little progress overnight, before we tacked back to the coast. At Coffs, there was another delay due to bad weather. When it improved, we over-nighted to Southport where we were joined by friends Ran and Keith for the trip through the Broadwater. This shallow area required much concentration to avoid grounding.

Once through to Moreton Bay, we proceeded up the Brisbane River to the Botanic Garden piles. We spent three days exploring Brisbane then headed for Scarborough Marina to slip the boat. After re-launching we had a night at Tangalooma, anchored behind a breakwater composed of scuttled freighters and dredges.

It was very eerie and we were pleased to leave the next morning for Mooloolaba which we left a few days later at midnight in calm conditions, heading for the Wide Bay Bar. This is the entrance to the Great Sandy Strait, between Fraser Island and the mainland, notorious for rapidly becoming treacherous. As we approached the waypoint for entry towards the sector light, the wind had increased to over 20 knots and the seas began to build. There were breakers on the bar to port, to starboard and ahead. We soon lost visual contact with the light, but thanks to the GPS I was able to establish our position and course to steer and headed in towards the breakers ahead until we picked up the Inskip Point leads, requiring a sharp turn to port. Soon we were in calmer, deep water, feeling much relieved.



Wild weather under the bushfire smoke as we head up the NSW coast.

After the Great Sandy Strait, our next main stopover was at Pancake Creek where bad weather kept us for several days. We then had an exhilarating run to Gladstone, with dolphins keeping us company for several hours.

North of Gladstone, our anchorages included Cape Capricorn (right on the Tropic of Capricorn), Great Keppel Island, Island Head Creek and Middle Percy Island. At this stage the weather became more settled and warmer as we moved north to Scawfell and Brampton Islands and then Shaw Island; in the Whitsundays at last! The final day of our trip saw us sailing up Dent Passage past Hamilton Island, then into Whitsunday Passage and the Molle Channel. In a state of excitement, we sailed past Airlie Beach to meet up with *Been-A-Long* at a little mainland bay a few miles to the north. A celebration followed into the wee hours!



A misty morning in beautiful Fame Cove, Port Stephens.