

By Chris Perry

AFTER spending 25 years bashing around the gulfs while offshore racing with Jimmy Howell, I thought it might be about time to get my own boat and do a bit of cruising. So in April 2011 Diana and Chris’s new Beneteau Oceanis 37 duly landed in Port Adelaide, and Kingsley Haskett got to work putting it together. It was a very pretty boat with beautiful cabin timberwork and plenty of space for a 37-footer.

We called the yacht *Nerana II* to honour my grandfather’s (Harry Perry senior) 21-footer *Nerana* in which he won the Foster and Albert Cups, the Australian championship trophies for this beautiful and fast timber racer. Grandpa and Stan Medwell (sailing the 21-footer *Gymea*) were serious rivals every summer Saturday during my early childhood. The original *Nerana* has been revived in recent years and taken to Goolwa to race. She is still there, and she still wins races. The cruising dream floundered for *Nerana II* due to lack of spare time as our crew manned Jim’s new boat *Vulcan* for offshore and inshore races, while sailing *Nerana II* in Twilights and various trophy races. We had lots of fun and won the last combined Twilight Series as well as Division II AMS in 2019-20. Diana loved the boat, but only to the extent of coming aboard for two social sails each season, these being Opening Day and the Port River picnic cruise on Anzac Day. Filling the boat up with mostly non-sailing friends for these two events each year has never failed to succeed in the enjoyment stakes.

However, with the retirement of *Vulcan* from racing, we needed another yacht to take our racing a step further. I had been looking for some time for a 38-footer with moderate draft that was more racer-cruiser than cruiser-racer. In February, the deal was done on a Salona 38 from Sydney which has a long background of inshore and offshore races to her credit. She has done three Sydney to Hobart races and a Sydney to Noumea race. She is 11.5 m overall, and has a 2.3 m draft with a three-spreader rig, and a serious prodder. She has plenty of sails, all asymmetrics for downwind, with full winch and sail control systems for racing. We named her *Nerana*.

Chris Howell, Bruce Wetherall, Colin Simpson, Peter Crook and I sailed her back from Pittwater in late February 2021 having dodged various COVID lockdowns. The day-and-a-half in Sydney for preparation was exhausting for the crew who had to sort through a shipload of gear and sails, as well as checking inventory and provisioning for an 8-day sail. We got away more or less on time and settled into the delivery voyage.

It was a great trip with kind weather most of the way. We were able to fly the big black A2 kite for nearly a day down the NSW coast and were impressed with the boat’s speed and handling. Bass Strait was kind to us, but we could see that the weather was going to



Nerana 15 April 1933 from the SA Maritime Museum

deteriorate once we cleared Wilson’s Promontory. Sure enough, by about a third of the way across to Cape Otway we had it on the nose with >25 kt south-westerlies and big seas. But one or two reefs took care of that and we enjoyed a brisk sail, achieving landfall at Apollo Bay.

Then it was dinner time. The sails came down while the autopilot stooged us directly into the big seas at 1.5 kts. Bruce cooked up another delicious hot evening meal which we shared around the saloon table. The weather eased west of Cape Otway and we motor-sailed with a following breeze under beautiful summer conditions all the way to Outer Harbor. It had been seven days at sea with a brief stop to top up our fuel at the Portland marina.

We have been able to do a few Twilights and Saturday races since delivering *Nerana* to Adelaide. The boat seems quite quick, but the crew will need extra practice to learn the mysteries of asymmetric kites after lifetimes of running normal symmetric spinnakers. Bruce has already got the hang of the martin release. You will have to ask him what that is.

Nerana will sail the 2021 winter series, and we look forward to trying to get the best out of her for the 2021-22 summer season to follow.



Nerana II in the Port River near the Quarantine Station



The newest Nerana – a Salona 38

By Deirdre Schahinger

DIS-ABLE Sailing has a lot to be thankful for and I’m taking this opportunity to say ‘thank you’ three times! Thank you to the Squadron Foundation.

Dis-Able Sailing Inc (DSI) is a volunteer-run charity with DGR status receiving no government funding. We operate on \$10 donations from our participants who sail with their Day Options groups during the week and, under normal circumstances, would fundraise at Bunnings with a sausage sizzle. For seven months last year we were unable to operate for obvious reasons, but our Club Membership, monthly berthing fees, motor servicing and the insurance of *Freedom* had to be paid. By October 2020 our bank account was very much depleted. Thank you to the Squadron Foundation for accepting our grant application for Corporate Membership 2021/2022 payment.

Thank you to Greg and Carol Patten (G-Wizz).

While in the dinner line-up at Port Vincent King of the Gulf regatta, Bob and I were talking to Greg, whom we have known since way back at Holdfast Bay Yacht Club (now Adelaide Sailing Club). At that time he sailed a NACRA catamaran and we sailed Hobie catamarans. We were discussing the reality of the effect COVID-19 had on DSI when Greg asked whether \$5,000 would help. “That would be fantastic,” said Bob and I as we moved on in the queue to have a very good dinner cooked by the Coastguard. A couple of weeks later Greg phoned me and very generously he and Carol donated \$6,000 to DSI’s account. We immediately put it to good use for *Freedom* – having the base of the mast repaired and putting on a better quality antifoul. Thank you again Greg and Carol!

Thank you to our volunteers.

Bob and I are ably helped in running DSI by Dennis and Peter. A perk of being a volunteer is that you get to race *Freedom*. Dennis and I, together with Janice, Kathryn, Julie-Ann and Ned, none of us particularly agile, raced in Twilights and the Women’s Series. Late last year I had successfully applied for a grant from the Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing to electrify the outboard motor, and thank goodness we had it installed before the Women’s Invitational Keelboat Race in December! In those conditions a pull start would have been impossible. Thank you all for your cheerful enthusiasm.



Everyone wears a life jacket



Nearly ready to sail

Editor: We obtained permission to take these photos of some of the group that come from Bedford Day Options. Bedford is a big group that has been coming since the beginning in 2015. They thoroughly enjoy their time on the water and the hospitality at the Squadron.





Restoration | Repairs | New Builds
Custom joinery, fit out, bright work, maintenance & traditional ropework

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