

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

LIFE RAFT - 4 man RFD at Quin's valuation and subject to survey.

MPS - SPINNOA-JENNAKA (call it what you like) - Blue and white, built for Duncanson 34, price \$750.

PRAM DINGHY - 7'6", orange f/g with oars etc, price \$275.

Contact John Ellison (PANACHE) or phone 339 3110.

MOSQUITO CATAMARAN - Sloop rigged, glass hulls, twin trapezes, earlier model in good condition, good trailer with spare wheel, 2 life jackets and trapeze harness. Price \$1300.

Contact Dave Hurford, phone 216 2628 (W) or 352 2834 (H).

The RSAYS Newsletter's classified advertisement service is offered free of charge to financial members of the Squadron for their private ads. Forms for lodging these ads can be obtained from the Squadron Office. Closing date for the next newsletter will be mid November 86.

JESSICA HARRINGTON'S CRUISING STORY

John has been a Member of the RSAYS for over thirty years and was a founding Member of CYCSA. He has done a lot of local racing plus three or four Hobart's, one Melbourne - Port Lincoln and a lot of cruising.

Prior to December 1985 my cruising experience was limited to a few trips to Port Vincent and Kangaroo Island with John on our Swanson 32 SWEET CHARIOT and once to Lincoln with Tony and Dee Flint on NYROCA.

In a nutshell my memories of cruising (which sounds so glamorous) focus in on seasickness, fright, fear, cold, wet and the post cruise joy of terra firma even though terra rocked for days afterwards.

In mid 1985 John received an invitation for us to crew a yacht which planned to cruise from Sydney to Melbourne; starting out of Sydney Harbour an hour before the Hobart fleet, then New Year's Eve in Refuge Cove at Wilson's Prom plus a day or so there and then onto Melbourne.

John advised me that the yacht was big, strong and built to survey (truthful). He went on to say that the cruise would be mindbending (truthful) and on such a fine vessel, no seasickness, leaks, coldness, fright or fear (lies - damn lies).

I will not name the make of the vessel for fear of litigation, but suffice to say it was built in Hong Kong to Lloyds specification and subsequently placed under survey to the Maritime Services Board (NSW) for crewed charter work. She is a 43' ketch and a sturdy motor sailer with a large pilot house.

To fill her with diesel costs \$1200 and she holds, I think, 1¼ tons of water. This is difficult for me to imagine because on SWEET CHARIOT we spend about \$100 per year on diesel and our water tanks

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take about five minutes to overflow over the saloon carpet when, occasionally, we fill.

However, the vessel has "proper electricity" which, unlike the beloved CHARLOT, drives a microwave, toaster, electric jug, hair-dryer etc. I still don't understand why we can't have those essentials on SWEET CHARLOT.

Prior to departure, Tony Flint cautioned us re going to sea in an untried, unknown vessel - but John assured me

After a leisurely Indian-Pacific train trip to Sydney we joined the vessel for a day or two for what the skipper euphemistically called "cruise preparation and hospitality". It eventuated to be non-stop work with a capital W.

I commenced my seasickness preparation to a very tight schedule. D Day minus three - wrist bands containing pressure points; D Day minus two - Sturgeson (courtesy Joyce Quinn); D Day minus one (Christmas Day) no alcohol. I knew I was another Jamie Cowell, Allan Quigley, Webb Chiles, Joshua Slocum etc.

DAY 1

We left the Spit Marina in Middle Harbour, caught the 11.00 a.m. bridge and motored into Sydney Harbour. There we saw most of the 180 odd Sydney-Hobart yachts dodging each other. "Set the main" said our skipper, a long time friend, Graham Brown. His willing crew followed his instructions only to find that the big sail in the middle was not attached to the boom except at the out-haul ("Loose-footed", they laughed but I know they weren't referring to me because I decided to stay in the cockpit, hold on and to look astern).

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The guys subsequently explained that the "plastic press-stud type, traveller cars in the mainboom track were Mickey Mouse" (whatever that inferred). Anyway, they only took an hour or so to replace them and we headed out through the Sydney Heads and turned right (if only we'd turned left) Barrier Reef, Whitsundays!!!

The afternoon was what they called "a run down the coast". It didn't seem much like a run to me because the speeds rarely reached "five kays", as they say, and the leading Hobart boats APOLLO and WINDWARD PASSAGE were abeam of us by mid afternoon and out of sight by dusk. However, the boys kept making us look backwards to show how well we were going against the rest of the fleet. Just to add spice to the cruise start, we were treated to a large shark-fin passing by close on our quarter.

Crew on board were skipper Graham Brown and his wife-to-be Robyn, two top Kiwis - Maggie and Terry, Maggie's daughter Tanya, John and me. We all struck an instant rapport. They all called each other by nicknames because of their occupations - thus Graham the Goldminer - he is a geologist, Robyn the Restaurateur, Maggie the Mower (she runs a lawnmowing business), Terry the Tinter (he runs a glass-tinting business), Maggie's daughter being simply called Froggy "because she looked like that when she was born". They never disclosed, to me, my nickname but because of my mal-de-mer medicinal precautions I surmised they thought up Jessica the "Pill Popper". John was, because of his maturity, referred to as Sir (spelled Cur) John.

Night one and we had the lights of Point Perpendicular abeam to Starboard when the forecast "fresh Southerly front" came through on the Sydney Radio sked. Well now. In sequence I recall that Mademoiselle Mal-

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de-mer decided to visit me (notwithstanding the precautions), then there was furling, reefing, going about, tying down and more of all that. The first night of my long awaited cruise was, shall we say, sub-optimum. My most clear memory is that of holding a bucket to catch the cascades of cold sea-water pouring onto my bunk and flooding my sleeping bag, pillows and most of my clothes. As much as I love John I then transferred to his bunk which was dry. Within a few minutes of becoming warm I heard John call "ready about" followed by a lot of noise, an opposite heeling of the ship and then I had to hold a bucket over my new bunk!

DAY 2

I came on deck at dawn to see Point Perpendicular dead ahead, having had it abeam the evening before. Having done a Captain Bill Henry Navigation Course I expressed the erudite view that the Night Crew hadn't done too well since we had gone Northwards instead of South in the darkness of the last ten hours. "Bad Northerly set" they said but even I slowly realised that, perhaps, such boats are not designed to go to windward in heavy conditions.

Really the skipper is a gentleman because he then took us into Jervis Bay explaining that "gentlemen never sail to windward". There we dried out and had, as neighbours, the new Oceanfast 3000 designed by Phil Curren with interior by expatriate Aussie Jon Bannenberg.

The vital stats of this remarkable vessel are 33.3M LOA, 29M WLL, 6.9M Beam, weighs 60T, and Speed 30K's. It has everything and looks like a James Bond machine. The vessel has been chartered for the America's Cup series by the Royal Perth Yacht Club. I expressed

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a very sincere interest in either being put ashore or joining the Oceanfast. Skipper Graham refused both requests.

Following the day's drying out we set sail at dusk for the long hop to Eden.

DAY 3

Mal-de-mer was residing, the crew were happy and we sailed southward in good conditions.

DAY 4

At dawn we put into Eden where we showered and cleaned up. Here we met with the crews of several of the Hobart fleet which had lost masts, rudders etc. "Hey, we're not too bad are we" I thought. A great sail down the coast that afternoon past Cape Green and into Victorian waters. Many schools of dolphins played gleefully about our bow.

DAY 5

Into Bass Strait and we had the highlight of the cruise.

Winged-out part-furled Genoa main and mizzen, tracking on the rhumb line with a full moon astern in about 20-25 ks. Incredible. Who are these people who get seasick and can't take it. Past the oil rigs and we spoke with them on VHF.

DAY 6

Like the recent Mexico City earthquake or the horrific plane crashes, I'll long remember the morning of

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31st December 85. In brief, the guys kept shortening sail as the wind increased. Around 2 am it hit. Sixty nine on the wind indicator. Blew the tied-down main off the boom and lifted the mizzen slides out of the track. The skipper was very cool and calm and quietly motored into the seas. I sat below and made my New Year's resolution - categorically. Mid-morning we came into Refuge Bay on the eastern side of the Prom and PEACE.

DAY 7

We dried out, slept and then went for a walk ashore to see the superb National Park. It's interesting for many reasons because sailors have for years painted the names of their vessels on the rock outcrops in this superb cove. The Rangers have now painted most of them out in rock-coloured paints. As an alternative they now have a large board on which interested owners or crews can paint or carve the name of their vessel. Fortunately, its hidden from view whilst at anchor. We saw out 1985 and saw in 1986 in great style, but John's singing and conducting - whew!

DAY 8

At leisure, whilst the Southerly blew through.

DAY 9

To sea. For the first time the compass showed west as we rounded the Prom and set course for Westernport. We tried to sail but used the motor nearly all the time because of the lack of wind, though late afternoon the guys set a spinnaker. The Skipper entered Westernport at night and at dawn we motored into Westhaven Marina.

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On the flight home, John thanked me for joining him and sharing the cruise with him. I smiled and said it was a "real adventure Darling, but you've got to realise that it's not my scene". I knew he was sad but that was how it had to be. I am not prepared to go cruising again. OK there are good times, but.

Today, as I write, Tony Flint rang from Melbourne to ask John and I if we would crew for him to Vincent for the end of the Two Gulf Rally series at the end of February. John looked at me and asked. I returned his look and said "..... Darling that would be great, please accept".

JESSICA HARRINGTON