

Quarterdeck

We apologise to Adam Wynn that in our last issue a silly error on our part gave his new vessel the wrong name. The boat is called *Pelerine*, which means a sea scallop or a female pilgrim in French. She is a Beneteau 311.

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Thanks to e-mail, we have received some news of *Piping Strike* from Mike Fowler and Helen McGivern, not forgetting Pita the dog. They took 24 days to reach Tasmania, of which only ten were at sea. This was via Kangaroo Island, Robe, Portland, Port Fairy, and King Island. They went down the W coast and through Hell's Gates into Macquarie Harbour. 'There was a big swell and we couldn't see the entrance until we were right up close. This was a bit worrying because of the sea running and proximity of breaking swells and associated rocks.' They spent 16 days exploring the area, including the

Gordon River, and finding shelter in strong gales. At one time they were pinned against a jetty and sustained some damage.

From there they seized an opportunity to run S before a strong wind. 'Our speed overall was so good that we were going to arrive at Port Davey in the dark, in the rain and mist, with a breaking following sea, and with no visibility. I don't know what they did before GPS and radar, but we were well inside Port Davey before we could see any land — and what land! — frightening in the early dawn. We found our way into Bathurst Channel, which is totally protected from any sea action and anchored in Wombat Cove, a delightful bay protected for all winds.' Here they experienced winds so strong that, 'Helen really liked standing on top of a rock 395 ft high and leaning at about 25° into the wind to stop from falling off.' What the dog did was not related.

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We hope to follow their progress and that of other cruising vessels, although space makes it difficult to publish full accounts of all.

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On the day that we received the page proofs of our last issue, Jack Wood died, after a long illness. He became a Member of the Squadron Roundabout, through having been Laboratory Manager in Professor Mitchell's Department of Biochemistry at Adelaide University. In a self-effacing way, Sir Mark was a wonderfully generous supporter of yachting and other nautical activities. He provided 12 ft cadet dinghies and Forster Cup 21-footers, always for others to sail. During the Great Depression, he helped destitute fishermen by buying their boats (their sole assets) and 'leasing' them back at rents of the order of a shilling a year. Regularly he took people from his Department to his holiday home at Strawbridge Point, American River, and allowed them generous access to *Grelka* and *Ultrama*.

In time Jack became Sir Mark's sailing master, entrusted to take *Grelka* away on his own, and at the owner's expense. This was how he happened to arrive at Cape Cassini a day or so after *Stormy Petrel* went up on the nasty reef there in December 1938. Life Member Bruce Tunbridge at that time was a member of Sir Mark's Department. He joined Jack in taking the *Grelka's* dinghy to photograph the wreck at close quarters.

After the loss of *Grelka* and Sir Mark's translation to become Vice-Chancellor, Jack moved to the laboratory at Roseworthy. He relinquished his membership of the Squadron, but retained a keen and generous interest in it. His gifts include a fine photograph of Mark Mitchell and another of *Grelka*, both printed and framed at Jack's expense. He wrote articles for us, including the strange tale of the formal expulsion of *Reverie* from the pool in the early 1950s. [*Squadron Quarterly* September 1996: 36-7.] We owe to him the stimulus of articles and correspondence initiated by his article *The Governor's Shark*, published in September 1995: 43-4. With his full blessing, we have repeatedly used his photographs.

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Jack Wood was one of Nature's genuine gentlemen. We will long remember him and be grateful for his generous spirit.

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Recently *Fine Romance* was lying in Emu Bay when the main battery failed completely. Ion and Margaret Ullett had nobody else aboard. (Not that your Editor would have been much help if he had been there.) They faced the daunting prospect of trying to raise the anchor and cable by hand and then sailing to Kingscote for a new battery. Surely there must be a better way! Indeed there was. Ion used his mobile phone to summon help from the RAA, invoking the policy that service follows the member, not the vehicle. It wasn't long before a helpful man arrived from Kingscote, and after a trip in the dinghy the replacement was installed.

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Max Holbrook has found information on the history of firing ceremonial salutes. Like the custom of shaking hands, the practice arose to confirm to a suspicious stranger that your intentions were peaceful. In the days when it took half an hour to reload a cannon, the act of discharge rendered it demonstrably safe, for a time at least. The conventional number of 21 guns has ancient symbolic significance in combining the numbers three and seven, from the Blessed Trinity and the Babylonian astronomers' count of seven planets, to say nothing of deadly sins and cardinal virtues. The noise of discharge frightened malevolent spirits, as well as impressing a potential enemy with your strength. The high number of 101 guns (fired recently for the Queen's 75th birthday) seems to have arisen from a mistake. Holy Roman Emperor, King Maximilian returned to Augsburg after a successful campaign, and the city sought to ingratiate him with a massive salute of 100 guns. The officer in charge lost count, and fired an extra one. As the Emperor continued his royal progress, other cities were determined not to be outdone. Hence a 'standard' of 101 guns arose to define a remarkably lavish ceremonial salute.