



THE HOLLOW LOG

The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association Inc.

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Finally, we cracked it for a group photo

Narrandera 2012

Greg Carr

I've got to admit, I enjoy putting a few words together about our National Regatta at Narrandera and 2012's event is no different. It's just such a good weekend. Several of us again took advantage of the Melbourne Cup long weekend and stayed an extra day.

This year's event wasn't without its inconveniences again, with the council commencing works on the mid car park. I actually thought this would have been finished by now, but alas, it was not to be. Because of the works, cars and trailers had to be parked elsewhere, making it somewhat inconvenient having to walk the "long and steep" walk that we all know so well. I had a grizzle to someone in the Engineering side of things that they always seem to plan some sort of works around Lake Talbot to coincide with our weekend. He explained that when they are allocated the money, they have to act quickly or lose it. For whatever reason, it seems the deadline seems to come around about the time of the year we are there. He was very aware of us coming and sympathetic to us, having put contingencies in place to minimize the impact on us (toilets, parking). On the positive side, 2013 should see a sealed and enlarged car and trailer parking area and better toilet access.

Still on the positive side, because access to the toilet was restricted, council placed a self contained toilet at the water's edge for us. This was extremely convenient. Also, the local ski club and council had laid new turf right along the water front for the full width. This was nothing short of luxurious, after previous years of dirt and very sparse patches of grass. The shore line had been bagged up as well and while not working really well for us this year, should be better next year once they settle in and the grass begins to grow through them.

Again it was great to see different boats on the water this year. Many of us had not seen *Larry's Folly*, Gary Redman's 186 powered Lewis runabout. Also with us this year were two immaculate Seacraft runabouts. *Vintage Red*, Jim Crilly's Holden powered 15 footer and Ken Lemin's 186 powered *Righty O*. These two occasionally ran together and were a delight to watch on the water. Stuart Beattie brought a couple of boats up from Tassie, one being *Jupiter*, an outboard powered mini-hydro that the driver kneels in. This boat was superb, but unfortunately Stuart had injured a knee, making it impossible to give the boat a good

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The JET

Frank Wicks



The JET is a plywood hard chine vintage racing boat or skiff as they were called with the driving position aft. Built in Melbourne by Jack Kenner in approximately 1959, the boat is 3.56m long with a beam of 1.39m and a depth to gunwale of 0.31m. Powered by a highly modified Renault engine offset to the port side of the centerline, direct driving a surface piercing two-blade propeller. Balance is achieved with the driving position in the aft starboard where the transom-hung rudder is also located.

When Jack first fitted the Renault engine to his original V bottom hull the speed record for the 48cu inch class was 32mph (51.5kph). In May 1958 he set the records for Australian, Australasian and Victorian records of 45.235mph (72.8kph). In June 1958 after designing and machining his own propeller he increased his records to 49.933mph (80.36kph). This achieved for the first time in Australia (according to an article in Water Sportsman magazine July 1959) a speed of more than one mile per hour per cubic inch for an inboard motor.

When the 48cu inch class was changed to 50cu inch by the APBA the engine was modified more and bored to 49.83cu inches. In March 1959 he raised his records to 52.384mph (84.3kph), then in April he again raised his records to 58.03mph (93.39kph), also claiming the records for the 75, 95, 140 and 225cu inch classes.

During this time of constant development on the engine he also built a new lightweight, plywood flat bottom hull to replace the V bottom one he started with. It is unknown when the hull was changed over, but this is the hull that survives now.

May 1960 saw Jack complete his last record run when he raised all four records to 59.893mph (96.39kph). The record for the 50cu inch class has not been broken.

The JET was then sold to JM Eddington and in September 1970 he set a record of 15.13sec in the 50cu inch class for the Special Quarter Mile Trials. This record is also unbroken.

The Engine

The Engine is a Renault Dauphine type 670-1, originally 850CC from about 1957 and has a multitude of modifications, all carried out with Jack's expert engineering skills. It's hard to know where to start but from the head down the ports have been enlarged from 23mm to 29mm and polished. The combustion chambers reshaped to allow the high top pistons, also made by Jack to protrude into the head where they can be seen half way up the spark plug holes. Care has to be taken when replacing spark plugs as some brands of the same type are a fraction longer so hit the pistons. The head surface has been machined and combined with the high compression pistons give a com-

pression ratio of 13:1. The top of the cylinder liners have also been machined to relieve the front and back of the pistons.



On top of the pushrod side of the rocker arms there is a frame which supports another set of valve springs that push the pushrods down to stop valve bounce. The rocker arms have been replaced by those from an earlier model which were fitted with brass bushes and the spring rocker spacers replaced with machined brass spacers. The block has had some of its excess weight cut off (gearbox mount section) and new engine mounts fabricated. The top of the block and cylinder liners have had 2.3mm machined off them. The timing gear in these engines originally had a fibre idling gear. Jack has machined the crankshaft and camshaft gears to fit a timing chain as well as fabricating an adjustable idler gear for the chain. The camshaft timing is Inlet opens 40° BTDC closes 76° ABDC Inlet opens 76° BBDC closes 40° ATDC.

The oil system has also been greatly modified, with the main oil gal-



lery blocked and diverted through a full flow oil filter. An external oil manifold has been fabricated and the block is drilled so as to deliver oil to each lobe of the camshaft. Oil is also delivered by external pipes to the rocker shaft, the timing chain and the propeller shaft which protrudes out through the stern of the boat and runs in needle bearings. The sump has been extended and baffled and now holds 4 litres of oil, double its original capacity of 2 litres. The crankshaft and conrods are polished and balanced while the flywheel has been lightened from 4.3kg to 1.8kg.



The engine runs on methanol which is fed through two Amal Mon-bloc carburetters type 376 - 28mm. These are fitted with adjustable main jets which are adjusted by two knobs from the driver's seat. It also has a fuel enrichment valve which feeds fuel via pipes that go into the inlet manifold and ports right up to the valves. This enrichment valve is required to get the boat up on the plane and is opened by the accelerator. Fuel can be shut off to this valve once the boat is under way by a small tap on the dashboard. The ignition timing can also be adjusted on the move by another knob. The exhaust has four tuned length 32mm pipes feeding into a 76mm pipe.

In 2006 Frank Wicks purchased *The JET* from Peter Alexander with the hope of returning it to its former glory. Since that time he has re varnished the hull and strived to get the motor running properly again. This has enabled him to run it in various classic boat meetings and also static displays at the Sydney Wooden Boat Festival and the Sydney Boat Show.



After Jack Kenner and then JM Eddington had raced *The JET*, it was then sold to Anthony Oates who never raced it. Anthony sold it on to Peter Alexander where it was placed in his private museum in Lochsport.



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workout. There were a few other volunteers, but that all fell in a heap when the prop came off and went to the bottom of the lake. Peter Drogenik brought along *Kestrel*. *Kestrel* is a classic Glen-L design, built by Peter in less than 12 months. Powered by a 302 Ford, many of *Kestrel's* brackets and fittings were cast by Peter especially for the boat. The boat is beautiful and all who rode in her were extremely impressed. Also impressive was *Kestrel's* trailer. To make launching easier, Peter has installed an airbag system, enabling him to lower the boat when launching, meaning the boat floats off a lot earlier than it normally would. The system works really well. Although Scott Wilson's *HI-FI* is not new to Narrandera, it's been a while since we've seen it there. The SA based Chrysler 313 poly powered boat is a real performer with the Chrysler V8 having a distinctive note. The final newbie there was my own skiff, *Impact*. *Impact* has been around for a while, but never on the water. There was more to that story in the previous newsletter and a little more elsewhere in this one. *Impact* is an Eddy skiff powered by a Holden 149. Matt Williams also brought along his Botterill hull to view. Still under restoration, the boat remained on its trailer and Matt's effort in bringing it up from Victoria for all to look at is to be commended.



The new look Bullitt

We had a total of 20 boats this year with an even mix of 10 weatherboards and 10 butter boxes, not that anybody really counts anymore. They included:

<i>Al Falfa</i>	Darren Crawford
<i>Bullitt</i>	Jon Levett
<i>Butter Box</i>	Alan Price
<i>Cassata</i>	Dave Pagano
<i>Classique</i>	Andy Griffiths
<i>Electric Girl</i>	Doug Bamberly
<i>HI-FI</i>	Scott Wilson
<i>Impact</i>	Greg Carr
<i>Jan II</i>	Colin Bailey
<i>Jupiter</i>	Stuart Beattie
<i>Kestrel</i>	Peter Drogenik
<i>Larry's Folly</i>	Gary Redman
<i>Mystress</i>	Neil Blyth
<i>Huff N Puff</i>	Dave Powley
<i>Righty O</i>	Ken Lemin
<i>Scrubcat</i>	Darren Goldberg
<i>The JET</i>	Frank Wicks
<i>Vintage Red</i>	James Crilly
<i>Wooden Worry</i>	Ray Russell
<i>Botterill hull</i>	Matt Williams



Dave and Suzie and the kids having a ball

Bullitt arrived this year looking fresh and a little different to last year after some serious work being done by owner Jon. The boat is now a twin cockpit and also now steers from the right. The 327 under the hatch still sounded as good as ever.

Maybe helped by the excellent weather, there was plenty of activity on the water this year apart from just the boats with a few of the kids trying their hand at riding tubes and knee boards. It was good to see some of the "older" kids jumping on skis and having a go, knowing full well that they would pay the price later on after using muscles they forgot they even had.

Our traditional Saturday night BBQ was as much fun as it ever is with everybody thoroughly enjoying themselves. For Sunday, as a bit of a change from previous years, the rough old meal served up at the RSL (the RSL being the only place open on a Sunday night), was replaced by another BBQ night at the caravan park. I'm not sure which was more fun - the Saturday or the Sunday night. I do know that there were some pretty ordinary hairstyles happening on the night. Also noticed was some very middle eastern attire and headwear as well. Maybe it was Arafat's ghost coming to check us out.



Two Seacraft a treat together

From memory, everything was pretty reliable this year, apart from some fuel issues and lost props and some oil splashed around. We are definitely getting better at this, remembering back over the years where we would always break a couple of boats.

I had a good run with my skiff *Impact* and was impressed with the performance from its 149 ci Holden, but after being 'bullied' into having a drive of *Scrubcat* late on Monday, well, as they say, there is nothing quite like a V8 skiff! These (all) skiffs are such a great ride

with everything happening so close to you - exhausts at your ears, spray up you back, the whole of the boat moving up and down in front of you. I really don't know how they ever raced them, going as hard as they did. Doug Bamberry also had a run and took young Nicholas with him, Al Price went out with son Conner and I had Mitch Griffiths on board for my run. All kids came back with beaming smiles - nearly as big as the smiles on the big kids who were driving.



Larry's Folly looking very stylish in blue

It was interesting when I went out in *Impact* wearing some very hi-viz earmuffs. I was expecting some teasing and was not disappointed. They worked a treat though and funnily enough, at the end of the day, anybody driving a skiff was wearing them. Far more effective than earplugs, but heaps more daggy.

With around 20 boats pulled up on the bank, we had similar problems to last year with boats banging together. Since they pulled the willows out, wakes are a real problem. Before 2013's event, I will suggest you all bring some fenders along to keep off each others boat or the other very effective method of tying a line to an anchor out the back of the boat.



The line-up

It was interesting watching the "older" boats going around being driven from nearly the centre of the front seat with only the driver on board. Those round bilged hulls just roll over unless you have the weight distributed properly.

The AGM was held again on the Sunday morning. I think I was referred to as sadistic for holding it on the morning after the big night before. Sadistic? Not at all. I like to think of it more as character building. Unfortunately, it's still the best time to have it and we really do get some great discussion going. Again, no committee positions were contested, so the 2011/2012 committee remains for 2012/2013.



Huff N Puff getting a work out

The local paper, the Narrandera Argus, ran a pretty good spread on us on the following Tuesday and featured *THE Jet* in the sports section the following week. We are becoming an important part of the Narrandera and Districts event calendar now. Three weeks or so after the event the council contacted me asking for the 2013 dates.



Kestrel with a couple of tourists on board

Another great weekend and a big thanks to all who came along. A couple of comments along the lines of "the best one yet" are certainly very heartening.

The date for this year is November 2nd and 3rd. We look forward to seeing you there



Stu Beattie's Jupiter

Impact launched - cont'd

Greg Carr

Well, continuing on from where I left off in the last newsletter, *Impact* was taken to Narrandera. With the shaft log having been resealed and being confident that the tank was clear enough of rust to allow me a reasonable weekend, I thought I was reasonably safe. Just to be sure, I also took some spare fuel filters.

I took the boat for a run early Saturday afternoon. It ran well enough until it spluttered to a stop a short distance from the ramp and I had to row it in. Back on the trailer and jets etc were checked and while not exactly right, they should have been close enough to keep everything going. There were no fuel blockages.

After some wizardry by our resident expert in all things mechanical, the boat was taken for a run by Dave Pagano. Unfortunately, Dave's run ended in a tow in as well.

Back on the trailer and some more messing around with jets and air tubes as well as a fuel filter change before Al Price (the wiz) had a drive.

Al's drive was better in that he got back to the ramp OK, but it still wasn't running as well as it should. I was still in trouble with fuel blockages. We pulled the line off the tank and found largish flakes coming through, big enough to block or at least severely restrict the tank pick-up line before even getting to the filter.

A well known skiff owner/driver said to me: "Now you know what it's like to own a skiff - all you do is work on it". I had to agree, so I decided to leave the boat on the trailer on Sunday so I could enjoy the day without fiddling with the boat.



On the Monday, it was back to business. An early trip down the the local service station saw a plastic temporary fuel cap purchased. Back at the boat, the cap had a hole cut into it. The fuel tank outlet was sealed off and the fuel supply line poked through the hole in the cap and suspended halfway into the tank, so as not to pick up any rubbish from the bottom. This worked a treat and the boat ran quite well all day. An exhaust gas analyzer was fitted and the required jet size was calculated comparing performance with different sized jets "borrowed" from Al-Falfa. At the end of the day, I knew what jets I needed.

The boat was given a work out by Darren Crawford late in the day and when back on the trailer, we noticed the nuts holding the rudder post bushing in the transom had all fallen off and the bolts working their way out. Another argument for Niloc nuts. It was time to call it a day.

Back home, I began removing the "rusty" tank for use as a pattern for a new tank. Pulling the tank out was not so easy. Like most skiffs, it was positioned down the back, beside the driver and outboard of the engine beds. It was big enough that it would not "roll" inboard over

the engine bed. It appeared that it had to be pushed forward into the engine bay, meaning the engine had to come out, so out it came. As it turned out, it had to be moved further up under the deck before it would come out. Again, a whole lot of contaminated premium fuel had to be drained and filtered (the mowers are running really well).

After extracting the tank and letting it dry out, I could hear a lot of rubbish rattling around inside. I eventually worked most of it out past the internal baffling until emptied from the tank. There it sat on the bench - a pile of hard reddish coloured flakes and chunks.

An hour or so after doing this, Ross Foster dropped by and I showed him the debris. By this time they had dried out and had lost the reddish colour and was immediately called by Ross as the remains of a wasp nest. I had to agree, but couldn't understand why it had not dissolved in the fuel. I also couldn't believe a wasp would build a nest in a fuel tank. It might have been relatively recent because the original fuel in the tank didn't even smell like fuel.



Professor Greg decided to experiment. I went and scraped a wasp nest off the shed and sprinkled some pieces into a dish of fuel and some into a dish of water. After a few minutes, the pieces in the fuel remained intact and reluctant to even crumble, while the pieces in the water had started to dissolve. As soon as I prodded the pieces in the water, they collapsed into very fine particles. Days later, the pieces in the fuel remained intact. Great thing about all this is that it looks like I don't have to get a new tank made.



I soaked and then flushed the tank out with water (much cheaper than petrol). Plenty of discoloured water came out and I kept going until it ran clear. Hopefully, it is all out.

The boat is now all back together and it's just a case of putting some fuel in and giving it another run, one of these days.

RUDE - a transformation

Member Scott Wilson has placed his Everingham runabout hull in the capable hands of Ron Johnson to complete its restoration as a skiff.

Some of the work done on the hull included fitting 10 new ribs, reinforcing the transom and widening the rear cockpit. Ron is currently working on the deck.

The boat will be powered by a 350 Chev with a Hanes and Hellyer gearbox, running 10% gears.

Below are some progress pictures.



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President's Pronouncements:

This club was built on a very strong web presence and remains that way today. The internet is now easily accessible from just about anywhere at anytime. The main way we communicate amongst ourselves is through the Bulletin Board, which is an integral part of the website. It is extremely quick and effective at exchanging information both at a public level and a private level when we need it for members only.

All the same, we still have many members who do not have easy or regular access to the internet and rely mainly on the newsletter for notification of events, etc. As we all know, this information can become stale very quickly.

If you know of someone in this position, please give them an occasional call to keep them up to date with what's going on. That way we're all up to date and included.

Happy and safe boating and remember, keep talking to me . . .

Greg

Around the Traps

General:

- As you may have seen on the Bulletin Board, a few old timber boats have turned up on a property in country Victoria. There will be an article on this find in the next newsletter.
- The Frank Lewis skiff *Miss Lyndy* is back on the water after restoration. The ex Victorian boat is now based in South Australia and will hopefully make an appearance at Goolwa in April.
- A Keith Simpkin built ex racer has surfaced in the Mulwala/Yarrowonga area. This runabout was fitted with two Fiat 1200 cc engines during its racing career. I believe it achieved speeds of over 60 mph. The hull is still in very good condition, including its original deck.
- Another twin cockpit has surfaced and was taken to a central Victorian address very recently. The hull is a bit of a basket case with the transom virtually rotted away, so a hard decision will have to be made when the boat is looked at more thoroughly. One good thing is that it still has some running gear with it.
- Rumour has it that a *prolific* Victorian based butter box restorer has taken on a challenge with the recent purchase of a clinker runabout. The ex racer has a bit of history and it will be great to see it out and about after over 20 years in a shed.

2012/2013 Committee Members

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Coming Events

February 2013

- Hammond Craft cruise up the Hawkesbury. 2nd. Meeting at Windsor ramp at 1200. Bill Bastian on 0448 892 837 for details.
- Australian Wooden Boat Festival. 8th - 11th. Hobart, Tas. The big one.
- South Australian Wooden Boat Festival, Goolwa, SA. 23rd & 24th.

March 2013

- Maribyrnong/Yarra River Cruise. 3rd. Meeting at the Warmies ramp (Williamstown) at 1000 for a 1030 departure. Please contact Greg on 0408 937 029 or Alan 0403 838 193 for confirmation of dates and times

April 2013:

- Classic Speedboat Spectacular. 13th & 14th. Goolwa Aquatic Club, SA. Contact Paul on 0419 826 377 or Dave on 0408 225 471

November 2013

- Melbourne Wooden Boat Festival, 1st, 2nd & 3rd, Gem Pier and the Commonwealth Reserve, Williamstown, Vic. All types of wooden boats on display, including speed-

boats. Contact Mark Bergin for details on 0418 565 848. (Unfortunately this event clashes with Narrandera. If you are not going to Narrandera, this is a great alternative to take your boat to).

*Please check for confirmation
of dates and venues*

- Team work is a lot of people doing what I tell them to do
- Never trust a man with short legs. His brain is too near to his bum
- Trying is the first step towards failure
- War does not determine who is right - only who is left

Quote for Today

*"Everything looks impossible
for the people who never
try anything"*

Club Contact Details

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Victorian/Tasmanian Chapter

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Membership Update:

Vic	42	NT	1
NSW	19	Tas	4
Qld	4	SA	12
WA	1	USA	1
Total	84		