



# THE HOLLOW LOG

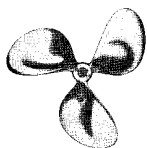
## The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association Inc.

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*Another modern classic emerges from the workshop of Ron Johnson*

## The Sickness

Greg Carr

The past 12 months or so has seen a bit of activity in the classic plastic area of boating.

I have been approached numerous times over many years by owners of fibreglass hulls with timber decks to join the CAWPBA. I've even had a few owners of older full glass hulls want to join. The owners of these boats were disappointed when knocked back with the explanation of "all wood only", arguing their boats are often older than some of the all wood units in the club.

We have had plenty of discussion within the club over the years about letting these boats in, but the decision has always been no. I will admit that I have always been a fairly loud voice in wanting to keep it all timber. Influencing me was a concern that because there would be a lot more classic glass and timber tops out there than all wood boats, and while it would probably have been OK with just the timber tops, if the all glass boats were included, I feared the club would be overrun and lose its identity.

So, where am I heading with this?

Last year and again this year in NSW, there was a very successful gathering of (mainly) vintage speedboats which included some all glass and

timber decks. This year's gathering was promoted as wood, but some non woodies turned up. Both events were very popular with over 30 boats participating up this year.

In Victoria, for three consecutive months now, there has been a date set for "old ski boats, race boats, anything cool and interesting" to meet up - for a *Classics Day*. I headed out to the first one but missed the second. At the first there were two wonderful classic glass ski boats and a glass race boat as well as two timber ski boats (should have been three but for mechanical problems). It was a great day consisting of a picnic lunch, a ski, a chat with old friends and new and just a going for a burn. The second meeting had four glass boats and a woody.

It just shows how the scene is changing with opportunities for classic boats. It was always just a matter of time for the vintage glass boats to start to come into their own and I'm probably a little surprised it has taken as long as it has. The Aussie Ski Boat blog has certainly helped it along.

It seems it doesn't really matter whether it's old glass or old wood, we all have "the sickness".

## Yarrawonga

The annual wet together on Lake Mulwala at Yarrawonga was on again this year, with Jon and Narelle again generously offering their home as a base camp.



*A few of the boats lined up*

The weather was much kinder this year compared to last, particularly for the run to Bundalong on the Sunday, with very warm temperatures and calm water.

There were 10 boats there over the weekend, including *Aquaholic*, *Bullitt*, *Butter Box*, *Kestrel*, *Matt's Botterill*, *Pagan*, *RicShaw*, *Steinway*, *Stormy*, *Suffrajat*, .

*Pagan* made its on-water debut for many of us, but continued to frustrate owner Ray with its refusal to run for any length of time once on the water.



*Pagan being assisted back to the ramp*

The ever reliable *Butter Box* also decided to play up with what appeared to be some water pump troubles leading to an overheating engine. Al was working hard on getting things sorted, but it wasn't to be and it couldn't make the run to Bundalong on Sunday.

I think *Bullitt* even made a quick trip home to get something sorted out.

All other boats seemed to behave themselves for the weekend, unlike a couple of their owners on Friday night. There were some bleary eyes and fuzzy heads on Saturday morning.

I'm not sure how Saturday night panned out as I couldn't attend and



*Bonnet is up with Al thinking about what's going on*

things have been pretty quiet about it. Not even any embarrassing photos placed in the member's area on the Bulletin Board. Very disappointing folks!



*RicShaw making its way to Bundy*

It was another great weekend for the grown ups, and also for the kids. They had a ball, particularly the girls on the tube behind *RicShaw*.

This weekend is definitely cementing itself on the Victorian Chapter's event calendar.



*Arrival at Bundalong*



## Bonnells Bay

The annual Bonnells Bay get together is becoming quite an event now, with over 30 boats turning up this year to what is becoming a broader vintage boat get together.

While the majority of boats were speedboats, there were also a number of putt-putts and a couple of cruisers that came along.

Again, the weather was extremely kind, ensuring a great day for all,



whether just cruising, water skiing or displaying a boat on the bank. A wonderful family atmosphere with everyone relaxed and enjoying their boats in an idyllic location.

I'm hearing it is definitely going to be on again next year, cementing itself onto the NSW Chapter's event calendar.



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## Trailer rescue

For some years I had been telling myself it was time to renew Stormy's trailer. The trailer was built for the boat in 1955 from steam pipe and was at the end of its life, with rust coming through at many welds. The trailer rode on Ford Customline wheels and springs and while it towed well, it had a few short comings in that the tow hitch was directly in line with the bow of the boat, preventing the car's tailgate from opening. Another problem was that it did not carry the spare wheel, meaning it was carried inside the car. The main problem, though, was how deep the trailer had to be put in to float the boat off. This was due to the turn fin having to pass over the straight cross-bracing on the trailer.



I wasn't interested in a modern trailer and spent a bit of time searching for a suitable second hand one and after missing a couple of potential candidates, decided to build a copy of the original.

Not having any real welding skills, renewal continued to be put off until one day when I was towing the boat across to the Shepparton Motor Museum with fellow member Ross Foster. During the trip we



## Greg Carr

heard a "ting" noise and looked each other wondering what had fallen off. I pulled over and while looking around the trailer I noticed a gusset had fallen off. It was time - the trailer was falling to bits - and for the rest of the journey I dropped plenty of hints to Ross that he should build me a new trailer.



The boat then sat in the museum for the next three months and on its return home, I put the acid on Ross as the trailer was not capable of taking the boat to Narrandera, which was only a few weeks away. Ross decided to take on the challenge. I would be his labourer.

I had an old "basket case" boat at home sitting on a "basket case" trailer, but we figured it would support Stormy for a week or so while the trailer was being built. We floated Stormy off her original trailer on to a dam. We dragged the old hull off the other trailer and pulled Stormy onto it. After some wheel spinning in the mud, we got the boat out. The weight of Stormy on the trailer had the tyres rubbing on the guards, but it would do.



After assessing the old trailer, we decided to use the original springs and hangers, axle and wheels, mudguards, jockey wheel and retraction mechanism, bow hoop and tail lights and their brackets. The chassis and guide poles would all be new, copied from the original, but lengthened 500 mm to clear the car's tailgate and to carry the spare wheel.

We set about dismantling the old trailer, removing guards, wheels,





etc. With the skeleton sitting on the ground, we had a pattern. Materials were purchased and work started.

The most difficult part of all of this was going to be copying the bends in the original. The two upper longitudinal members each had four bends, with two of the bends having a double direction change. The lower tubes had only one bend each. The tubes were separated and fixed together by gussets distributed evenly along their lengths. The bends really did take some doing to get right, with Ross having an amazing ability to "know" where to bend, push, cut, ease or whatever else was needed to bring the four tubes into alignment with each other and in symmetry from side to side. The two middle cross braces were 'veed' to allow the turn fin to pass over without having to sink the trailer as deep as before.

The trailer took shape quickly and was back on its axle within a week. The jockey wheel quickly followed.



The original timber sleds that carried the boat were always a bit of a mystery in that they were neither parallel or symmetrical and the boat never seemed to sit properly on them. The new ones were installed such that they now sit directly under the boat's engine beds for their full length. They were also made a little longer to offer some protection to the cav plate from the rear.

It came time to do a trial fitment of the boat and the trailer. We moved Stormy into position under the block and tackle that was fixed to a roof beam. We placed a double wrapped sling under the hull immediately forward of the engine to take the main weight of the boat. Another sling was placed under the transom and would lift the rear of the boat using an engine crane.

The boat was lifted, the new trailer placed underneath and the boat lowered onto it to work out where the trailer sleds needed to be shaped to fit the curve of the hull and planks. Three fittings saw the boat fitted up and the position for the bow hoop finalized. The boat was taken off again and the trailer removed and then fitted with the hoop, guide poles, tail light brackets and mud guards. Ross's work was done, with only paintwork and wiring now required.

Not being a spray painter meant I would paint the trailer in the same way as I did nearly 20 years previously - with a brush and using enamel. The finish came up very nicely. The timber sleds were given six or seven coats of clear before being fitted with a timber cradle between them up forward to better support the front of the boat. Marine carpet was then fitted.



The original tail lights along with new wiring were installed and amazingly, it all worked properly first time!

The boat was then placed on the trailer and the trailer placed on the back of the car for the tailgate test, which it passed with ease. The spare wheel was placed on its new carrier on the front of the trailer before I set off for a road test. The trailer towed beautifully, steady and true. A job well done, Ross.

There are more pictures and additional text available on the website's Reader's Boats page.





## SO LONG II

Earlier this year a bloke with a boat in tow turned up at the ski club in Yarrowonga. The old clinker generated some interest with the locals and in discussion it was mentioned that it was for sale and did they know of anyone who would be interested. He was referred to a local boat workshop, who mentioned a local wooden boat enthusiast. A phone call was made and the boat was taken around for show.



What turned up was a Col Winton hull, *SO LONG II*. Constructed in 1961, the boat was built to race. It had been fitted with a 138 ci 6 cylinder Holden with a Repco head. The boat, with a top speed of 55 mph, apparently had a fairly successful race career.

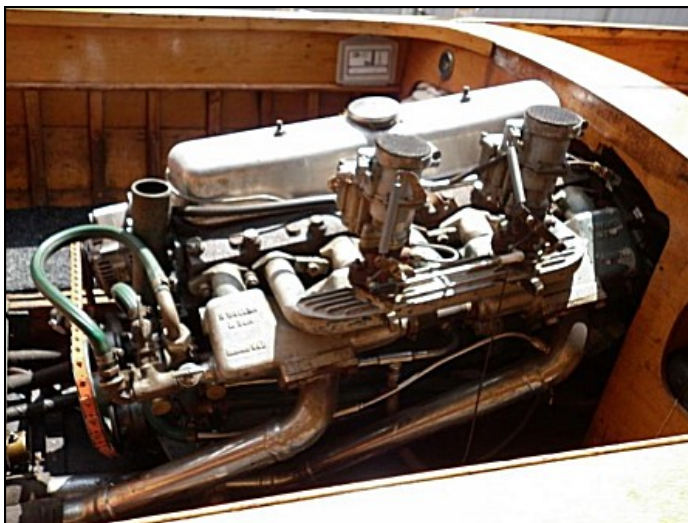


The current owner purchased the boat about 10 years ago and used it several times each year (it makes you wonder how no-one had seen it on the water before). The boat had been well looked after and was in excellent and very original condition. Unfortunately, the Repco head had been replaced.

There was some discussion held about the boat and a price before the owner returned, with the boat, to his Shepparton home. Some further negotiation took place over the next couple of weeks before a price was agreed and the deal was done.

*SO LONG II* has joined the fleet of John Sullivan, complementing the 15' Lewis runabout John already has in the shed.

After getting the boat home and having a "go over it", the boat was taken for a run on Lake Mulwala with the support crew of Jon Levett. The boat went well, with surprisingly good performance from the little Holden. Unfortunately, some quite minor steering issues arose, cutting the day short.



So, another absolute classic turns up out of nowhere. Man, just how good is this wooden boat scene?



## Winged Lewis

Fresh out of an extensive restoration, this Adelaide based winged Lewis is probably not too far from making its debut by now.

More on this Chev V8 powered ex racer a bit later.





## Lowanna

Member Gary Drewer has picked up a one of the Frank Lewis runabouts mentioned in a previous newsletter.



*Lowanna*, a 16 footer, came up for sale in December in Sydney as a bare hull, stripped down, but still with all the original running gear and hardware included, except for an engine and a trailer. The boat is set up for a 350 Chev.



The hull is in excellent condition, meaning it shouldn't be too long before we see this beauty back on the water. I'm tipping (hoping) Narrandera.



*"Lowanna" in earlier days*

## Vandal

The other Frank Lewis boat I mentioned in an earlier newsletter was this 16' twin cockpit runabout.



*Vandal* turned up at a clearing sale in South Australia late last year. Dave Drewer thought he'd go and have a look as the pictures shown were a bit of a tease.



To cut a long story short, Dave eventually purchased the boat. *Vandal* is in need of a fair bit of TLC, but is solid and should make a good restorer.

Looks like a real father/son thing with these two Lewis hulls. Well done fellas.



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## President's Pronouncements:

*You may have noticed membership numbers have increased by around 25% since late last year (bottom right of this page). The low numbers were a bit of a concern, for sure. As is normally the case and gladly it was again this time, non-renewal is usually just a memory lapse. Having said that, it is reassuring to see quite a few new members come on board, replacing those that have in fact dropped off.*

*Maintaining member numbers is important not only for all the reasons the club was originally set up for, but also to cover our newsletter and particularly insurance costs.*

*Sadly, the boating season is fast coming to a close for the southern states with the cooler weather starting to creep in. For me personally, I have used my boat more this season than for some years and will try and make the most of the few remaining good days. I hope you all got plenty of use out of your own boats as well.*

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

*Greg*

## Coming Events

### April 2014

- Goolwa Aquatic Club Aquafest. 12th & 13th. Boats of all types ranging from vintage skiffs, hydros and runabouts to more recent BAD raceboats. Spirited racing demos and more. Refer [www.goolwaaquaticclub.com.au](http://www.goolwaaquaticclub.com.au) for further details.

- E C Griffith Cup. 25th, 26th & 27th. VSBBC site, Lake Eppalock, Vic. Australia's premier boat race. Refer [www.vsbcc.org.au](http://www.vsbcc.org.au)

### May 2014

- Seacraft Syndicate Boat Owners Club annual regatta. Echuca, May 3rd and 4th. The SSBBC's big one. Refer <http://ssboc.com.au/> for more details

### Nov 2014

- CAWPBA Annual National Regatta. 1st & 2nd. Lake Talbot, Narrandera, NSW. Contact Greg on 0408 937 029 or Alan on 0403 838 193 for details

*Please check for confirmation  
of dates and venues*

## Around the Traps

### General:

- Do you have something to say but are averse to using the Bulletin Board? Why not drop us a line here. Do you want a picture printed? Again, send it along.

Many are wary of the Bulletin Board in that it is open to the general public and has the potential to be a bit brutal and lay you bare. If you only wish to share your thoughts with club members, there is a non public "Member's Only" area on the Board to do so, but you have to be both registered on the Bulletin Board and a current club member to access it. Registration on the Board keeps the idiots out.

But, if you are still uncomfortable with the Board, feel free to use the newsletter as your outlet.

### South Australia:

- *Half a Chance* has made its way to SA from Victoria. The 17' winged Simpkin is to undergo a complete resto, starting soon.
- I hear a 15' project skiff is about to depart Victoria for South Australia, to be tucked away as a future project.

### NSW:

- The Bridge to Bridge Race Committee within the Upper Hawkesbury Power Boat Club is looking to organise a display of any and all of the previous outright winners of this legendary race.

If you know the whereabouts of *Archimedes* (1935), *Stroller* (1952), *Country Lass* (1968) or any of the other previous winners, they would love to hear from you.

The event is on Sunday 4th May this year.

Contact Nathan Mills via email at: [nmills@ignitedesign.com.au](mailto:nmills@ignitedesign.com.au)

- *Suffrajat* has been replaced by a clinker and has now moved to its new home in NSW. OK John, pressure is now on to make an appearance at Narrandera.

### Vic:

- A CAWPBA member was seen recently driving a fibreglass boat and enjoying it. Yes, you know who you are. Just because your own woodie was broken and this plastic one had a bit of age on it doesn't really mean it's OK. Allowable once because of an emergency, but be warned, you are now on watch.

### Quote for Today

*"There is more to life than  
increasing its speed"*

2013/2014

## Committee Members

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### Membership Update:

Vic	41	NSW	19
SA	10	Tas	4
Qld	3	WA	2
ACT	1	NT	1
NZ	1	USA	1
Total	83		