

Postal Address:
18 Grandview St
Moonee Ponds
Vic 3039

Phone: 03 9370 2987
E-mail: nh35_stormy@bigpond.com

We're on the web
[http://www.users.bigpond.com/
NH35_Stormy/](http://www.users.bigpond.com/NH35_Stormy/)

Editor's Note:

In the depths of a Melbourne winter (which really hasn't been all that bad), my thoughts are of warmer days and Narrandera. If you are coming along to our Nationals this year, please let me know so I have some idea of numbers.

Elsewhere, there is much talk of colour newsletters. To help you appreciate how it could look and provide feedback on whether you are prepared to pay higher membership fees for it, I will email a colour PDF version of this issue if you request it.

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

Greg

Around the Traps

General:

- Regular viewers of the ABC's Collectors TV show would have seen the article on NSW member Dave Pagano's boat collection and his recent run in his hydroplane *Aggressor*. Well done Dave. Feedback about Dave's three or so minutes of fame has been very positive.

- We have realigned ourselves with the fiscal year now and you should have received a membership renewal notice with this newsletter. As discussed elsewhere, fees remain at \$30.00.

Victoria

- For the first time in about 10 years the club decided not to show boats at the Melbourne Boat Show this year. Continuing increases in the cost to show boats in what is normally the club/community/non-profit organisations area dictated we make a bit of a stand, as did other organisations. As a club, we could afford the costs, but it was the principle of it all.

Membership Update:

Vic	32	WA	2
NSW	31	Tas	3
Qld	4	USA	1
SA	7	Total	80

2007/2008 Committee Members

PRESIDENT

Greg Carr
AH: (03) 9370 2987
Mob: 0408 937 029
Email: gca42796@bigpond.net.au

VICE PRESIDENT

Paul Siddall
Mob: 0419 826 377
Email: lema033@bigpond.com

SECRETARY

Rob Cranfield
AH: (02) 4578 1793
Email: rcfeld@accsoft.com.au

TREASURER

Darren Goldberg
AH: (03) 9783 5952
Mobile: 0418 171 042
Email: darren@monetpress.com.au

COMMITTEE

Dave Pagano Mob: 0413 766 501
Bob Carter Mob: 0418 101 626



The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association Inc.

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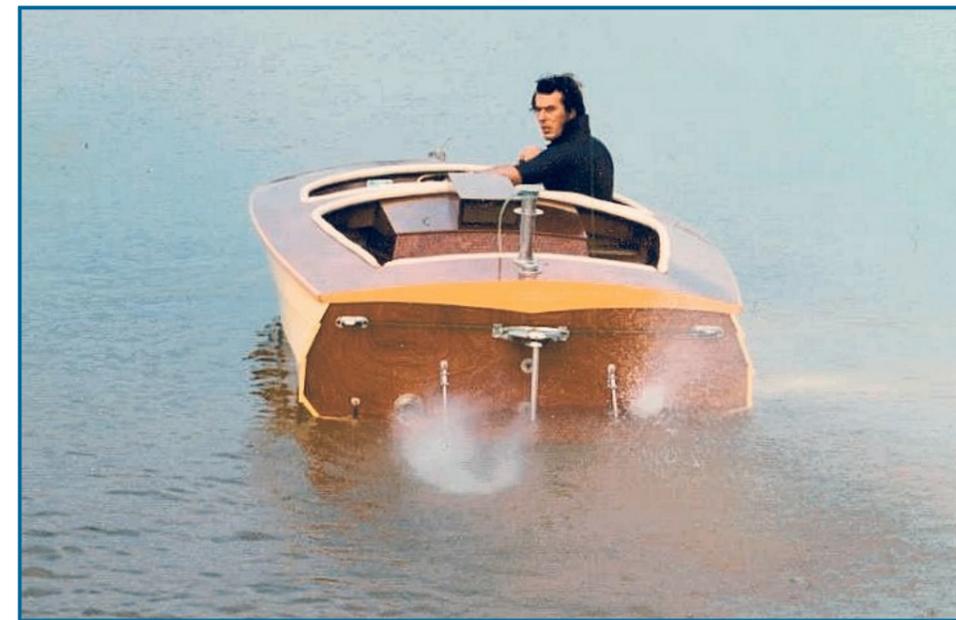
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THE HOLLOW LOG

Volume 8, Issue 3

July 2008

Newsletter



1975 Simpkin

For some years now the production of a colour newsletter has been raised on many occasions and has created some good discussion.

Naturally, everyone would like to see pictures in colour, but the biggest limiting factor has always been the cost. It is not cheap to produce colour in the (small) quantity we require and the club simply could not sustain the cost of a colour newsletter without a big hike in membership fees. This has stalled any decision for some years and continues to do so.

Costs and production issues of a colour newsletter were discussed at the last AGM with good input from all those attending. While the cost factor was recognised, support for colour was just about unanimous and that we therefore continue to explore the change to colour.

While many have since pushed to go ahead with the colour newsletter, many have also pushed back because of the cost and the inevitable annual membership fee increase, which would have to be raised to at least \$50.00. As such, I have decided to leave fees at the current level and continue with the black and white newsletter. The option of selling the newsletter outside of the

group to help cover costs was considered, but to have any real effect, depending on numbers sold, it would have to be priced at about \$10.00 per copy, which is pretty expensive for an eight page spread, not even on glossy paper.

In recognition of the what is the inevitable, the colour format newsletter will be developed over the coming months. It is relatively easy to produce something in greyscale, with contrast and brightness being the biggest considerations with the pictures, but colour is a whole different game. It is not just pictures, but headings, columns, etc. The potential is enormous, but the skills (mine) are basic. This edition was actually produced in colour, but printed in greyscale for the mail out.

There is another alternative to a printed colour newsletter and that is an emailed or downloadable version in PDF format. As few people own A3 size colour printers, this PDF style would be in single sided A4 format. The biggest downside to this is that we have many members who are not internet/email savvy, disadvantaging them as this method would not be an option for them.

As always, good constructive feedback from you is always encouraged and appreciated.

Coming Events

July 2008

- Sydney Boat Show. Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, July 31st - August 5th.
- Brisbane Boat Show. Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, July 27th - August 31st.

August 2008

- Perth Boat Show. Perth Convention Centre. 20th - 24th.

October 2008

- Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association National Regatta, Narrandera, NSW. 25th and 26th. For details, contact Greg Carr on (03) 9370 2987.

February 2009

- Australian Wooden Boat Festival. Hobart, Tasmania. 6th - 9th.

March 2009

- South Australian Wooden Boat Festival, Goolwa, 7th, 8th and 9th. For details, contact 08 8555 1955 or email on: info@woodenboatfestival.com.au

- Heritage Afloat Festival of Wooden & Classic Boats. Lake Macquarie, NSW. Details coming.

① *Please check for confirmation of dates and venues*

Narrandera 2008

Narrandera is fast approaching and things are looking promising for this year's event and importantly, I have been told the lake will be full for us this year.

I've been talking to a couple of members who will be bringing along boats either not seen before or that have been out of circulation for some time. At least a couple will be fresh out of restorations and include a 16' Lewis skiff.

The traditional "Narrandera Nationals" T-shirt is in the early design stage. Again, prepayment for the shirt will be required with prices around the \$25.00 mark again this year. A full range of sizes will be available. I will be taking orders for shirts shortly.

Club Contact Details

New South Wales Chapter

For further information, contact Dave Pagano by phone on: 02 4777 4558 or 0413 766 501 or by e-mail: davehotboats@hotmail.com

Queensland Chapter

For further information, contact Greg Carr by phone on: 03 9370 2987 or 0408 937 029 or by e-mail: nh35_stormy@bigpond.com

South Australian Chapter

For further information, contact Paul Siddall by phone on: 0419 826 377 or by e-mail at: siddall@smartchat.net.au

Tasmanian Chapter

For further information, contact Alan Mansfield by phone on: 03 6428 2290 or by e-mail at: a_mansfield@bigpond.com.au

Victorian Chapter

For further information, contact Greg Carr by phone on: 03 9370 2987 or 0408 937 029 or by e-mail: nh35_stormy@bigpond.com

Turbo-Fire update



Bob Carter sent in some progress pictures of his Lewis runabout Turbo-Fire. Work is progressing nicely, with the hull now being painted and right way up again. Bob is now considering what to



do with the interior with the original stained finish the ribs and flaky paint on the planking. Bob is confident the boat will be ready for our Nationals in October.

Speed Record Anniversary

A 25th anniversary celebration of the Tasmanian water speed record, which was also the Australian 7500cc hydroplane record, was held on May 7th .

It was held at Wonders of Wynyard (a historic veteran car museum) where the record breaking boat "Road Runner" was on display until June 30th, 2008.

The boat had been loaned by Chris Palmer for the exhibition and the owner/driver from that day, Francis Ransley, recalled the event with 70 odd guests at a morning tea.

A video of the run was also shown.

Francis bought the boat from Peter Knight of hydroplane fame from New Zealand and after a lot of time and money, achieved 141mph (227kph) at Rosevears near Launceston on 7/5/1983.

The Australian 7500cc record had previously been held by Ernie Nunn at 223kph.



Francis Ransley and Road Runner. (Photo courtesy of "The Advocate", Burnie, Tasmania)

Bob Carter

Launchings



Member Leigh Thomas recently launched *Nailed*, his 17' Sydney-cate hull. The hull was completed in 2006 and Leigh has been busy fitting it out since.



Visitors to the 2006 Melbourne Boat Show would have seen the hull with signage and not much else. Leigh has chosen a 350 Chev as the motive force.

Re-launchings



As reported in the last issue, Bob Carter's Lewis skiff *Rebound's* 327 Chev was churning out an impressive 427 HP and 410 ft/lbs of torque.

After refitting the engine, Bob gave the boat a run at the Carrum



Watersport Centre in April.

Bob was pretty impressed with the way the boat performed, with the engine feeling very strong and responsive.

Two men were talking. 'So, how's your sex life?' 'Oh, nothing special. I'm having Social Security sex.' 'Social Security sex?' 'Yeah, you know; I get a little each month, but not enough to live on!' A wife went in to see a therapist and said, 'I've got a big problem, doctor. Every time we're in bed and my husband climaxes, he lets out this ear splitting yell.' 'My dear,' the shrink said, 'that's completely natural. I don't see what the problem is.' 'The problem is,' she complained, 'it wakes me up!'

Quote for Today: "He has a right to criticise, who has a heart to help"

Aggressor

Back in March this year, the traditional CAWPBA follow-up Monday after the Sydney Classic and Wooden Boat Festival was held on the Hawkesbury River out at Windsor. While this year was basically the same as previous years, with several club and non-club boats turning up, it was a little different with one particular hull generating a great deal of interest - *Aggressor*.

The boats that came along on the day were *Cassata*, *The Jet*, *Apache*, *IvGottawoody Comanche*, *Stormy*, *Renegade*, *The Bug* and even a classic plastic called *Strawberry Wine* came along for a look.



Aggressor, Dave Pagano's 26' hydroplane, was to have its first "serious" run in about 30 years. Dave had taken the boat out a few days before, but it would not perform, with the theory being that the wrong propeller was fitted. The prop came with the boat, supposedly being the original.

The day was certainly entertaining, but not without its dramas.

A few boats were put in the water prior to *Aggressor* turning up. When the big boat arrived, it was a case of many hands making light work as many volunteered to help. The propeller (another prop that had been rushed up from Victoria) and rudder had to be fitted before the boat could be launched. The schedule was fairly tight as there was also an ABC TV crew filming for a segment to be done on Dave on the ABC's Collectors TV show.

The big boat was launched and idled out in to the river, waiting for the TV crew to position itself for the runs. Unfortunately, once in position, the V12 would not start again, forcing the boat to be towed back to the ramp. Even under tow, this boat has "presence".

In the meantime, the trailer had dropped off the end of the ramp and was proving impossible to get back onto the concrete. The trailer weighs in at about a ton and as such, was not an easy lift back onto the hard. No amount of pulling by trucks and four wheel drives would get the trailer back on the ramp. An incoming tide wasn't helping either, making it deeper and harder to get at the trailer. By the time a tilt tray tow truck was brought in to lift the trailer, the tide had come in too far, not allowing the truck to get back in far enough. A mobile crane was eventually brought in to lift the trailer out. A whip around was held and generously donated to to cover the cost of the crane.

After some considerable coaxing and several adjustments, the Merlin finally started and spluttered slowly up the river running very, very

Greg Carr



rich, with flames emanating from the exhaust stacks and leaving an impressive smoke trail behind it. Eventually it cleared and the engine roared into life and *Aggressor* began its run up the river with Dave and long time *Aggressor* fan and supporter Gary Grant in the cockpit.

The boat looked, sounded and performed superbly. It sat steady on the water and looked every bit the thunderboat that it is. The sound of the Merlin echoing down the river was nothing short of a symphony to everyone's ears, just a wonderful sound.

After several reasonably high speed runs, the boat was brought back in to the applause and cheers of the crowd of onlookers.

Dave said later that he has never been afraid to drive any car/boat/motorcycle flat out until then. He said that he was only "feathering" the throttle, with the power available from the engine truly awesome. *Aggressor* was achieving speeds around 170 mph in its racing days



Another boat with quite a pedigree also performed extremely well on the day. Frank Wicks' little skiff, *The Jet*, was in fine form on the day and showed what it was capable of with a couple of high speed runs down the river. This remarkable boat, built in the 1950's, is powered by a 50 ci (800cc) Renault engine and achieves speeds of around 50 mph. It was a treat to see this boat run well and it was a just reward for Frank who has been so determined in getting the highly developed engine to perform properly.

No doubt about it, it was another great club day on the Hawkesbury that was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Indian Rope Trick



Member Jeff Lockhart decided some work needed to be done on the bottom of his skiff *4 Bees Two* before he took it up to a classic boat event in Forster recently. Jeff needed to turn the boat

over and as he was working alone, needed to devise a system to roll the boat single handedly. The sequence of photos above shows just how Jeff managed to do it using his "Indian rope trick"

Cruizin'

Greg Carr

For some time I have been trying to get a cruise organised for the Victorian branch on either the Yarra or Maribyrnong rivers. We were just about there when I discovered that I couldn't get a Saturday or Sunday off work for some time (no, I am not irreplaceable at work, it was other circumstances), so it was postponed for a few weeks.

In the meantime, Dave Pagano had to come to Melbourne for work reasons and managed to get down a day early on a Thursday. Dave was keen to do a cruise through Melbourne, so we took *Stormy* out.

We cracked it for a superb Melbourne autumn day with plenty of sun and no wind. Although not overly warm, it was certainly pleasant. We had a great four hours on the water, travelling from Williamstown to the Swan St bridge before turning around and heading back, about 22 kms all up. Slow going with a 5 knot speed limit, but very relaxed. The city certainly looks different from the water - beautiful!



Welcome to Venice

There really is nothing quite like Venice! It looks just like you see on the travel shows – beautiful old buildings rising up out of the water, canals, gondolas and the ever present wooden power boats.

The Grand Canal is the life vein of Venice and boats are like cars and barges are like trucks – in fact, they are like the heart! Simply amazing. It is fantastic to see boats cruising everywhere, hearing the sound of their engines and watching these awesome wooden crafts leaving their wake behind as they transport people all over the place. As well as being the family mode of transport, many are water taxis.

It was our second visit to Venice and having run out of time on our first stay, the goal was to find at least one boat builder if we could. Steven was on a mission! I was very interested to see if he would be successful, given that not everyone in Venice speaks English and sometimes the language barrier can be a problem. There can be quite a bit of sign language and definitely a lot of smiling. When you say you are Australian – the Italians love you and will always try to help.

We were in Venice in their autumn and the weather can be a little unpredictable – when it rains in Venice it is a shocker. To stop your eyes from being poked out by the never-ending sea of umbrellas as the masses of people walk along the skinny streets turns out to be a life challenge and when you make it to your final destination still able to physically see, the sigh of relief is huge.

We usually travelled around by water bus ... a rolling, lurching, bobbing and at times, scary water experience. I found myself compelled to act as a counter-weight, which in itself is funny on account of these water busses are actually the size of a bus and the impact of me against the hundred other commuters is, well – a bit stupid really! Steven pointed this out to me every time we boarded one of these ‘hellrides’ ... I am exaggerating a little but needless to say I was always glad to get off at our station.



Venetian Glass is famous worldwide and it is made on The Island of Murano. The Island of Burano is famous for lace. We went to Murano. The hotel we were staying at ran a free shuttle service over to Murano – the hotel boat was just beautiful and it was an opportunity to travel in one of these amazing craft we had seen so often cruising along the canals.

As we made our way across to the Island sitting in the cabin of this beautiful boat, Steven’s face lit up as we followed the coastline

around to the Glass factories – ‘there’s a ship yard over there!’ A large, tall, metal, crane structure was clearly visible from the water as you can well imagine, we did a quick tour of the glass factories and then headed towards the area where Steven thought the yard would be.



We left the glass making factory area and we walked and we walked all the while heading towards the large gantry we had seen. It seemed to me as though we were pretty well lost. Steven had faith! We had actually found our way into an industrial area and saw a couple of young blokes coming out of an old dilapidated factory that had a ‘Mer cruiser’ sign on it. After enquiring if anyone spoke English, we persevered with the slow English and some sign language with one of the men, who seemingly understood ‘boat maker’, we were off. After wandering along a path that had obviously been walked along many times before, we came to a small lunch shop – full of workers. The smell of pasta and other food was wonderful. ‘Ahhh – Come!’ So we followed. For a second my imagination ran wild - I had us robbed and killed and left in the knee high grass that seemed to fill the surrounding area ... but no what was to come was the most amazing and wonderful experience that we will no doubt remember for life.

We followed this happy, and did I mention, the second biggest man I have ever seen in Italy, down the path some more where we came to a fenced area and a black wrought iron gate.

The difference between one side of the gate to the other was incredible. On one side was the grassy wetland, the other side there were manicured gardens and lovely house. We entered, ‘Gigantor’ took us

Lisa Gilbert

to the office and he started chatting to this lovely old man in very fast Italian. This lovely gentleman turned out to be the owner and master craftsman – Signor Salvagno!

A few hand gestures, the words ‘Yes, yes’ and then ‘Uno momento’ – the big man was gone. Seconds later the appearance of a young man in overalls – ‘hello my name is Francesco – can I help you’ ... it was like finding a pot of gold. How wonderful – an English speaking boat builder! We were ecstatic! We explained who we were, where we were from, our interest in the wooden boats – the whole story really and then we were treated to a personal tour of the workshop.

I had not seen anything like it ... Steven was amazed! The whole place was full of sawdust, bits of wood, tools, varnish and there was one huge 11 metre length of Mahogany that would one day make up part of one of these beautiful boats. The craftsmanship, the finish – simply superb! Even more amazing was the realisation that the workshop was very simple. The tools were quite basic, antiquated even and to turn out such beautiful boats was true testament to the builders themselves.



We both walked through the factory in awe – you could see various stages of the hulls from when they look like a set of whale bones and then in a corner there was one entirely finished boat. Immaculate! It was named *The Rebecca*.

The sad tale of ‘*The Rebecca*’ was that a rich American gentleman had ordered it and unfortunately died 2 weeks before it was due to be delivered. *The Rebecca* was for sale. Of course we wanted it! Who wouldn’t? At a bargain price of Euro 400,000. Of course, we couldn’t afford it, who could? Well apparently there are some very rich Australian’s who can as they had made a couple of sales to ‘someones in Sydney’ we were told. *Rebecca* was up for sale and considered quite a bargain.

Francesco explained that the boats were covered as there was trouble with ‘cats piss’. We got it! The Island of Murano obviously has its own share of wooden boat lovers of the feline kind. Cats, apparently, feel the boats make great houses to live in and unfortunately were quite obviously a problem.

We were taken back to the office where Signor Salvagno had waited for us. Francesco translated. He proudly showed us the letters of appreciation from some of the lucky owners from around the world –

he was very proud, and rightfully so.

We chatted but were mindful of keeping Francesco from his work. We thanked them both profusely. They did not get tourists visiting so it was a novelty for them and a wonderful experience for us.



Steven’s mission was accomplished. I know he would say it was, without doubt, the absolute highlight of our trip to Europe for him.

The enthusiasm to complete ‘Half A Chance’ returned...

Once again, it really proves - there is nothing like a great wooden boat!



The website address for Cantiere Motonautico Serenella is at: www.cantiereserenella.com

Lisa Gilbert is the wife of member Steve Zeigler, the owner of the Simpkin runabout, Half-a-Chance