



THE HOLLOW LOG

The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association Inc.

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Classic interiors - early 1950's Hartley

Stuff

Greg Carr

Man it was hard finding content to include in this issue. Just lucky we had an event as big as the Goolwa Speed Boat Spectacular to report on, but then, that's what it's all about I suppose. As quiet as it is, there is always something going on in our world of wooden speedboats.

Interesting to see that speedboats are now being invited to many of what are the more traditional wooden boat shows. I see the Jaca Celebration of Wooden Boats to be held in Grafton in November specifically mentions speed boats as being welcome, something they never did. Speedboats were shunned in no uncertain terms by many "true" wooden boat enthusiasts, and often still are, but in the main, many people in these groups are realising that these boats are every bit the wooden boat they personally relate to, with skills and methods used that are no different to the construction of the more typical wooden boats they and the public identify with - namely sail boats, putt-putts, clinker dinghies, strip plank canoes, etc. Speedboats just happen to go a lot faster and make a whole lot more noise doing so. They also throw up a wake that is not often compatible with craft such as canoes, smaller rowboats and the like.

The efforts of Dave Pagano in getting speed boats on the water amongst the more traditional boats at the Australia Day celebrations held at the Penrith Lakes National Rowing over recent years is to be commended. These boats, when put on the water 'en force', proved a spectacular crowd pleaser.

Events such as these will continue to grow and while it is a lot of fun displaying your pride and joy at them, we do not mess around with wooden speed boats just to display them at every wooden boat show that comes up. We own them because we enjoy them for all sorts of reasons - the restoration process, the look of them, being different to the rest, the sound or maybe that we just like throwing lots of money into a bottomless pit.

We've spoken a bit over the years about producing a CAWPBA calendar and I'd like to try and get one produced for 2013. As such, I'm looking for some really good photos of your/our boats. You know the ones I mean - those stand-out photos you've taken that you've given yourself a big pat on the back for. You can email them to me, but they need to be a decent size and minimum 300 dpi resolution. My email address is on the back page.

Minx returns

Many will remember the runabout *Minx*.

The 1965 Bruce Walker built hull was restored in the mid 1990's by Frecheville-Heaney boat builders in Paynesville, Victoria. The boat was fitted with a Holden grey motor and used only a few times before being placed in storage.

It was purchased in 2002 by club member Keith Laws, who renamed the boat *Pearl Necklace*. Keith kept the boat until 2004, when it was sold to Ian Dicker. The boat went with Dicker to Jindabyne in NSW where it was used for a couple of years before being placed in storage until offered for sale in 2012.

The boat was recently purchased by Jason Orval. Jason found the old 138 Holden's head cracked in five places and is currently in the process of replacing it. Jason has renamed the boat back to *Minx*, the name coming from the old Hillman Minx badge fixed to its dashboard.

Jason hopes to have the boat at this year's nationals in Narrandera.



Minx pictured earlier this year

Newbuild

Here's a further update on the progress of the 18 foot clinker runabout under construction by member Ron Johnson.

As can be seen, the boat has progressed very well with all the ribbing installed, deck frames in and the deck now on. The boat certainly doesn't look too far from final paint. I'm amazed at the speed at which Ron has done this boat considering he is kept reasonably busy with a few restorations as well.

It is pretty special to know that these sorts of boats can still be built. When I say "these sorts of boats", I mean your classic Australian clinker runabout. In power, it seems the only hulls built now are plywood and in clinker style, they are dinghies that have (in the main), been glued together. In saying this, I have absolutely nothing against the timber boats being produced today and I applaud the skills of their builders, it's just that I wonder if we are losing the ability to produce that classic Aussie timber clinker.

Sadly, the skills for this work are quickly being lost because we continue to lose the educational facilities in which to teach them. For example, in Victoria, the Victoria University was about to invest



Greg Carr

around \$3.4m in the Williamstown Maritime Heritage site to set up their traditional boatbuilding campus there. This has now been abandoned because of the Victorian government's savage cuts to education means the university will now drop the course. Amazingly, the \$3.4 million that would have been used for the relocation came from a government grant! This now leaves Victoria without any TAFE based boat building courses, relying on the few boat builders offering some form of apprenticeship to teach people in these traditional methods, but I wonder if they can continue to offer the training without the necessary trade school technical and theoretical content.



It was argued that it is a dying trade with few people taking up enrolment, but I suppose you could argue that for many courses offered that will still continue to receive funding - mainly in the areas of the arts, but not sure about blacksmiths, tinsmiths, wheelwrights, dry stonewall builders, brightsmiths, stone masons, I could go on

These are my views only, not necessarily the views of the CAWPBA. Probably just a bit biased as well!

Buckshot

I mentioned in the last newsletter that “Gelignite” Jack Murray’s old boat had surfaced. For those not familiar with Jack Murray, Murray was a cyclist, champion amateur wrestler, pioneer water-skier, race car driver and all round sportsman as well as being a successful business owner. As a participant in the tough Redec car trials in the 1950’s, it was in the 1954 trial that Jack earned himself his nickname by tossing sticks of gelignite out the window of his Ford V8 to liven up his entrance to towns.



Buckshot was owned by Murray, but probably under a different name. The boat was used regularly by him on Lake Bathurst in NSW.

The boat carries its original Ford 272 ci engine, but the hull is in a pretty sad state at this time after years of being left exposed to the elements. I would hazard a guess the engine will have had some “work” done on it. The picture on the left is several years old and the boat has deteriorated further. This is a real shame as the boat is part of Australian history as Murray was considered one of the founders of Australian water skiing for both recreation and sport.



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Goolwa Aquatic Club Aquafest

Greg Carr

The Goolwa Aquatic Club in South Australia held an event over the weekend of April 14th and 15th to celebrate the opening of their new clubrooms after major renovations had been completed. The Sunday was set aside for a Classic Speedboat Spectacular and an invitation was sent out to the owners of classic speedboats to come along for the day and demonstrate their boats either statically or out on the water in race like conditions.

The word was put out amongst club members by Dave Drewer, who had been invited by the Goolwa Aquatic Club to advise and coordinate the older boats.

After a slow take up, we ended up with a total of 16 club boats, coming from South Australia, Victoria and NSW. These included: *Cassandra, Dragon, Friski, Hi-Fi, Jan II, Jason, Jayme II, Lincoln, Ol-Skool, Rebound, Renegade, Scrubcat, Skitter, Stormy, The Sting and Wooden Worry.*



off with hydros, then came the V8 runabouts, then skiffs and then the rest. The runs were held under virtual race conditions, with a start boat and safety boats, correct flagging, rules, first aid, etc. Each demo went for four laps.



Among the other timber hulls participating were *Buccaneer, Cherdith, Gi-Gi, Star Flight, Miss Australia, Stardust, Vampire and Fury.*

Saturday was devoted to the GAC demonstrating to the public the various water sports activities and facilities available to them from the club. Many of our boats were placed on display in the carpark. Sunday was our day, but not just for old woodies. The boats participating ranged from our vintage timber to relatively recent glass hulled blown engine boats developing serious horsepower and travelling at serious speeds. We also had the in between – glass hulled and timber decked.

Boats were divided into groups of similar horsepower/type. Each group had three runs on the day, which was great. The program started

There were few breakages over the two days. *Wooden Worry* had some steering issues when running on Saturday and unfortunately broke a throttle cable on the first run on Sunday, effectively taking it out for the rest of the day. It was a shame for Ray after dragging the boat across from Melbourne. A problem was also encountered by *Cherdith*, which lost an exhaust stub during its second run, allowing engine cooling water to be pumped into the hull when running, but worse still, allowing water to enter the hull through the hole in the



transom when stopped. The boat was very low in the water when it was virtually lifted back on to the trailer with understandable urgency by the many helpers. *Fury* finished the day with gearbox troubles.

Without a doubt, the skiffs were the crowd pleasers. These boats generated considerable interest with the public when on their trailers, but were just spectacular out on the water. Running were Bob Carter's *Rebound*, Dave Pagano's *Renegade*, Glen Traeger's *Fury*, Darren Goldberg's *Scrubcat* and Jeff Thompson's *Linda K*. While *Linda K*'s 1600cc engine struggled to keep pace with the big boys running V8's and sixes, it still performed admirably. Watching these boats leap and skip around created many "oohs and aahs" from the crowd. *Renegade*



was treated to a great solo run at the end of the Sunday activities with Dave Pagano behind the wheel.

It was a whole new experience for many of us who were not familiar with boat racing and its rules and regs. Trying to spot the various control flags being shown is not that easy when you are out there



certainly had that effect on several occasions when only the prop and rudder were left in the water and on one occasion, only the bottom quarter of the rudder. Really spectacular stuff! Dave had a regular passenger in the boat with him, Michael Bihune, who was having a ball. Definitely no fear with the young ones! *Rebound* was running the best I've ever seen it run, performing far better in the choppy water that the race conditions created than we usually see when running in the relatively smooth waters of Lake Talbot. *Fury*'s first outing was certainly impressive with the boat showing a good turn of speed and its 327 Chev sounding just as it should. *Scrubcat*, still settling itself in, this being its first outing since its post-restoration run at Narrandera last year, ran beautifully and showed no vices under race conditions.



Amongst the runabouts, *HI-FI*, *Cherdith* and *Oi Skool* were the crowd pleasers, showing good speed and *Cherdith* being very entertaining when leaping out of the water. The skiffs were all as spectacular as each other, but as mentioned before, *Renegade* displayed some impressive air time. With the hydros, *The Sting* put on the great display we expect from it in the hands of owner Dig Traeger and we were also

getting bounced around and concentrating on what you are doing, and that's me saying that from a 40 mph boat, let alone those doing more than twice that speed. I know on a couple of occasions, the black flag came out to tell us to come in and many of us just couldn't see it. As for counting off how many laps you had done to know when to come in because the race had finished - well, forget it! It's



amazing how quickly a few boats can chop the water up, such that I often had trouble keeping my foot on the accelerator.

Commentary on the day was very good with plenty being said about the boats on the water and their history, although I did find it interesting when watching a video later to hear that *Stormy's* engine was a race engine used by Norm Beechey in Canada. Really not too sure where all that came from.



The conditions on the day were superb. Blue skies and warm with light winds made things very comfortable for both participants and the spectators alike.

The event was run like a race meet and done extremely well. There was always plenty of action out on the water, with very little quiet time between events. Two tractors were in operation getting boats in and out of the water. The drivers really knew their stuff and did a fabulous job. This event was such a contrast after enduring two very poorly run major APBA events in Yarrowonga in the recent past.



Among a few boats to come out of sheds for the event were *Stardust*, a very original early 50's Hartley design running a 221 ci Ford Mercury flat head V8. The boat was up for sale after being with its original owner for 49 years. Another, *Buccaneer*, was a solid and original 18' Hammond running a 427 hooked up to a massive two speed gearbox and was also up for sale. *Fury*, a 16' Lewis skiff that has been under restoration for some years now made a spectacular debut at the event.

Miss Adelaide, a well pedigreed local hydro, also made an appearance. I have heard a bit about this boat over the years, but had never seen it.

The boat is currently under restoration.

Member David Keller brought along his 1960 283 Chev Corvette powered Lewis, *Skitter*. This boat is in superb original condition, but the Chev just would not co-operate on the day, meaning the boat had a fair bit of trailer time.



The Everingham *Vampire* or *Ol' 65* (not too sure what name it goes under now as it was not sign written) appeared as well. Again, another classic Everingham, so popular in South Australia.

Stardust also made an appearance. Many Victorians would remember the boat as *Yandy V*. This winged 18 footer certainly gets around in that it was originally a Victorian boat, went to Adelaide in the early 90's, was sold from there to someone in New South Wales, was bought back about 10 years later by the previous owner and returned to Victoria, and was then sold back to South Australia, where it is now. The boat is currently up for sale again. There were also one or two others there that I can't put names on.

Crowd numbers were excellent with plenty to entertain them. There were amusements for the kids, classic cars and boats for the adults, helicopter and steam train (full size) rides, classic aircraft (Tiger Moths) flypasts and more. Helicopters, both TV and joy riders, were buzzing around all day, reinforcing the big event feeling of the day.

Noticeable was the sounds of the old engines out there being quite distinct from the more modern boats racing. The 307's, 327's, older



350's, 313's and 318's and even the 454 sounded so less angry than the modern hard revving motors of today. It was a comment I also heard a couple of times from people in the crowd.

I must thank a couple of people on the day. Many thanks to Scott Wilson (*Hi-Fi*) who looked after *Stormy* for me when I knicked off on numerous occasions to attend to other boats. Also many thanks to



Leanne Bihune who did a great job with the video camera photographing the day's events. As a result, a 50 minute video of the day is available. The price of \$15.00 covers the cost of the quality packaging, postage and includes a few dollars for the club. If you'd like a copy,

me a ring on 0408 937 029 or email me at gca42796@bigpond.net.au.

It was a truly great weekend and a credit to the Goolwa Aquatic Club and all the volunteers. What is really good news is that it was successful enough to convince the GAC to hold another speedboat spectacular next year, so book in for the weekend of April 13th and 14th.



Memory Lane

I mentioned in the last edition about how I'd come across some ski jackets that I would have used as a teenager. Pictured at the right are examples of each type.

The top picture shows a fabric type with polystyrene blocks sewn in around the waste line. It was held in place with a single draw string at the bottom and fabric straps tied into a bow (no doubt double knotted!) above.



The lower jacket was vinyl with the inner and outer layers welded so as to capture pockets of air for flotation. There was one draw string and press studs to keep it on.



Obviously, water skiing was a lot tamer back in the 60's as there was not a lot keeping the jackets on one's body.

The brands were Sonata (top) and Blue Peter (bottom).

Financial Planning

Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the successful family business.

Knowing he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed to find a wife with whom to share his fortune.

One evening, at an investment meeting, he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away.

"I may look like just an ordinary guy," he said to her, "but in just a few years my father will die and I will inherit \$200 million".

"Impressed, the woman asked for his business card and three days later, she became his stepmother.

No doubt about it, women are just so much better at financial planning than men.

Sacrebleu!

A thief in Paris planned to steal some paintings from the Louvre. After careful planning, he got past security, stole the paintings and made it safely to his van.

However, he was captured only two blocks away when his van ran out of gas.

When asked how he could mastermind such a crime and still make such an obvious error, he replied, "Monsieur, that is the reason I stole the paintings. I had no Monet to buy Degas to make the Van Gogh."

And now I suppose you're wondering how I had De Gaulle to put this in our newsletter.

Well, I figured I had nothing Toulouse.

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President's Pronouncements:

Pretty quiet this time of the year. Again, I believe there is plenty going on in sheds around the country in preparation for the coming warmer months, but you are just not telling me about it. I do know of a few boats that have changed hands and also of a few that have been taken up by people keen to do a restoration. Hopefully, we'll see these boats on the water soon. Also wonderful news is that a new Aussie clinker runabout has just been built.

Things for me are about to change considerably as I start a new chapter of my life. After 43 years in the aviation/airline business, I've decided to call it a day and hang up my spanners (actually, pens). I am really looking forward to the normality of life without shift work. Hopefully now I will be able to spend some time on my projects that have sat idly in the shed for some time now. Life is just so full on nowadays.

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

Greg

Coming Events

August 2012

- Powerboat Picnic Day, 26th. Goolwa Aquatic Club, Goolwa, SA. Social day for all powerboats. Contact glen@traegers.com.au for details

October 2012:

- Test and tune day. 7th. Narrandera lead up. Lake Epplalock, Vic. Contact Greg on 0408 937 029 for details

November 2012:

- The CAWPBA Annual National Regatta, 3rd & 4th. Lake Talbot, Narrandera, NSW. For details, contact Greg on 0408 937 029 or Alan on 0403 838 193
- Jaca's Celebration of Wooden Boats, 2nd & 3rd, Grafton, NSW. All types of wooden boats welcome, including speedboats. For details see www.jacarandafestival.org.au

April 2013:

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

*Please check for confirmation
of dates and venues*

Around the Traps

General:

- Well, it's that time of the year again - subscription renewal. There is a renewal form enclosed with this issue of the Hollow Log. Details for payment are on the form - with the options of a good old fashioned cheque or direct transfer into the club's bank account. Fees are due now.
 - I failed to mention in the last newsletter that the quiz had been correctly answered by Jon Levett. The boat in question was built by Jack Eddy.
 - When the last newsletter was printed, the printer accidentally printed the first copy in colour. Very impressive indeed! Unfortunately, colour is prohibitively expensive for us, but remember that you can always print your own colour copy after downloading the newsletter from the website.
 - In case you missed it, the restoration of Darren Goldberg's skiff *Scrubcat* was featured in July's edition of Trailer Boat magazine. Darren also managed to have the club feature in a half page article in the same magazine. Great stuff.
- ### NSW:
- Late news in relation to the story on *Buckshot* on page 3 is that the boat has been purchased by a retired boat builder with the intention of restoration.

Did you know that ..

Most people involved with timber boats will have heard of the unique Tasmanian timber called Huon pine.

It was only a few years after Van Diemen's Land was settled that explorers found ancient tree trunks buried in the mud of rivers close to Hobart town. They were amazed that these trunks were still complete, unaffected by rot. They wondered if this was the boat building timber the world had sought for thousands of years. It seems they were right - it is probably the best boat building timber in the world

Huon pine contains oil that repels fungus, insects and pests and marine organisms, making it ideal for boat building. This essential oil (methyl euganol) has also been used for dressing wounds, treating toothache and as an insecticide. It is this oil that also gives Huon Pine its everlasting sweet aroma.

Quote for Today

*"The shell must break before the
bird can fly"*

2011/2012 Committee Members

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Membership Update:

| | | | |
|-----|----|--------------|-----------|
| Vic | 44 | NT | 1 |
| NSW | 20 | Tas | 4 |
| Qld | 3 | SA | 12 |
| ACT | 1 | USA | 1 |
| WA | 1 | Total | 89 |