

~topsails~

October 1973



HARTLEY T.S.18 and 21 ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

General Meeting to be held at Sandringham Yacht Club, Lower Deck, at 8 p.m., on 24th October, 1973.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Minutes Last Meeting
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Measurer's Report
5. Publicity Officer's Report
6. Purchasing Officer's Report
7. Talk on Member's Radio - Western Port Safety Council.

S. R. THOM.
Secretary.

EVENTS OF CRUISE ON WESTERNPORT BAY
27th-30th September, 1973

Narration by Des Webb.

We launched off Warneet Beach in very windy conditions. Once on our way down the channel, we set storm rig and sailed to Barrilliar Island for a lunch stop. The wind gradually eased during the afternoon and we ended up with full rig and genoa. We sailed into the anchorage at Sandy Point before dark. Arthur Cowie's T.S.21 was already anchored there having sailed from Hastings.

We enjoyed ideal sailing conditions on Friday and sailed up "The Nits" off Observation Point for a lunch stop. The anchorage there is an excellent all weather anchorage but use of it is entirely dependant on tide times. We later sailed back to our Sandy Point anchorage for the night, and Arthur returned to Hastings.

On Saturday the weather was perfect for both sailing and swimming and after breakfast we sailed across to Tortoise Head where the view from the top is magnificent. We heard on our two way radio that Peter Zimmermann and Don Paulsen (both with T.S, 18's) were sailing out of Hastings to meet us, to be followed later by Arthur Cowie's T.S.21.

We rendezvoused with Peter and Don off Tortoise Head and decided to sail to "The Nits" for the rest of the day. The weather was perfect and we spent much time swimming and sunbaking. However, the wind had been steadily hardening all the afternoon and the outlook for Sunday looked pretty grim. The tides were such that ideally we should leave about 5.30 a.m. on Sunday. The alternative was to leave about mid-day and punch the tide and the wind some of the way back to Hastings or Warneet. As I was supposed to be flying to Sydney on Monday, I decided to sail out at 5.30 a.m. Therefore we retired early to bed. The crews from the other three boats lit a fire and had a party on the beach, to say nothing of a certain bottle of whisky!

The wind was really howling when we left the next morning, under storm rig we reached Cowes in half an hour! The wind suddenly gusted to 50 or 60 miles an hour and we were laid almost flat, I thought for a moment that we'd had it! When we came up the sails were flogging so wildly, that it was a gigantic task to take them down. With the 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ H.P. outboard motor going almost maximum we were at times barely moving against the wind and waves.

My main concern was that if the motor failed, we would be dashed to pieces on Cowes beach. After motoring for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours or more we were creeping up towards the beach off Sandy Point. However, I realised that by this time there would be very little petrol left. I knew that if we ran out of petrol now, we would rapidly be blown back to where we started and then on to Cowes beach!

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I therefore planned two courses of action

- (a) If the motor stopped, we would set sail again and turn and run with the wind on our quarter back to Observation Point.
- (b) If we could reach the nearest part of the beach, to throw an anchor on the beach and everybody to jump over the side to pull the boat 1/4 of a mile or so to the Sandy Point anchorage.

Luckily we were able to put plan (b) into action and by the time we reached the anchorage we were completely exhausted. The sight of the calm water in the anchorage and the refuge offered by Sandy Point was indeed like a little bit of heaven, and I thanked God that we had reached it. Having changed into dry clothing and eaten a most welcome breakfast we began to feel much more optimistic.

I spoke to the other boats back in "The Nits" over the two way radio and told them briefly what had happened to us. Feeling much refreshed we set sail again and made good speed back to Warneet. About an hour after arriving home my boss phoned and told me that the Sydney trip had been postponed and that I needn't have worried!!!

Much to my amazement, far from being put off, Eric Lang who had been crewing for us for the four days, thanked me very much and said he'd enjoyed the very valuable experience.

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A FEMALE POINT OF VIEW

Following the epic trip of Des Webb & Co. I felt prompted to relate the other side of the story.

We arrived at Hastings at 6 p.m. Friday night and had the boat in the water before dark. A meal of Kentucky Fried and a hot coffee settled us into the mood for a good weekend.

Arthur Cowie was anchored and was attending to a mis-hap he had with his car. The other boat to join us, Don & Rhonda Paulsen arrived at 9 p.m. and with plenty of volunteers he was in the water in no time. It was calm and peaceful, a good night's sleep ahead despite the occasional rattle of a halliard.

We set off in fine sunny weather on Saturday morning with a following wind approx. 15 to 20 knots, and had a marvellous whisker pole run all the way to Observation Point meeting up with Des at Tortoise Head.

We dropped anchor in a delightful little inlet with a sandy beach. We had lunch and lazed around whilst the children swam and splashed around in the dinghy. We also collected a heap of fire wood in preparation for the evening. After the mosquitoes left us we enjoyed ourselves with ample liquid refreshments despite the beer strike, black potatoes (even salt and butter to garnish) and plenty of laughs. It was perfectly safe to leave the children sleeping on the boats as the water had completely gone so we had peace from that department. The only adverse part was walking to and from the boats in the dark, not knowing how many crabs we were standing on, ugh.

Sunday morning was a slightly different picture, the sun was still there but the wind had come up overnight, in fact it howled but we were completely protected. The Webbs had left and the Cowies were making a valliant effort to move the boat out in the trickle of water that was left to us. We all decided to try to go and keep together but our ignorance of the channel and the diminishing tide forced us to sit in the mud till about 11 a.m. We had moved away from our sandy beach and were in soft mud, so one can imagine the sights that had to be seen to be believed. Peter, past his knees in mud, frying pan in hand, made a great effort to catch a fish, caught like us in the mud. It was a Banjo Shark and after inspecting it we threw it back into a pool. It's not only cats that have nine lives. Talking of cats we also had ours on board and he's a pretty good sailor. Don Paulsen ventured to the beach with his girls in the dinghy, pushing it over the mud till he reached a bit of water. Once there, there was no coming back when it started to rain so the dinghy became an umbrella. Finally he paid us a visit but this time we winched the dinghy, crew and all, across the mud and Don rewarded with an Irish coffee for his trouble.

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We left at 11.30 a.m. by motor and had a hard punch ahead of us. The radio contact was a great comfort although the motor interfered with the ariel, something to look into. We were lucky enough to find a quiet patch over the shallows after an hour or so and made the most of it. I had prepared some soup before we left and managed to finish lunch by the time the sea was rough again.

At this point the Paulsens boat was quite a distance behind as they were towing a dinghy and the Cowies were well ahead as they left before us so we were all scattered. Don could see us thrashing around and decided to take shelter behind Tortoise Head as the sky had become very black as the South Westerley came over. It hit us with a terrific force and we were quite concerned especially when the sail tie came undone or broke and the wind caught the sail. A knife handy at the helm is a must for this type of cruising as we were able to cut the lashing on the end of the main and although I felt as though I was on a bucking horse instead of a boat I managed to undo the shackle pin and get the sail into the cabin. Peter was ready to slash the sail if the worst happened but all's well that ends well.

After the initial onslaught the change eased a bit and with the incoming tide we arrived at Hastings by 2 p.m. which was extremely good time even though it seemed like an eternity at the time. The Paulsens sailed in at about 4.30 p.m. in good conditions and none the worse for their trip. In fact they made the wisest decision to take shelter and avoid possible disaster and were lucky that conditions modified as quickly as they did. It's always a hard decision as it could get worse and one could be stuck there for hours or days.

I have come to a few conclusions that could be worth passing on to those of you who plan to venture out. Have a two way radio for the contact between boats is very reassuring. If you do take shelter and can't get back messages can be relayed to relations and worries are allayed plus the possible danger and trouble to others who may go looking when a boat doesn't come in.

Stick to the same sailing ground where possible until you are familiar with all the safe anchorages as it's another great comfort if you know where to go if it does get rough. Many times we have set off on a lovely day and the change a day later is incredible, especially on a longer cruise over three or four days.

Try not to tie yourself down to a fixed time of arrival when you arrange to meet visitors on a given destination as they are sure to worry, our one experience of this resulted in The Cowes Ferry searching for us, failing this they would have sent up a light plane to search and all the time we were taking shelter.

And finally, if you haven't been put off, remember it's only the bad times that get the most advertising but the countless good weekends we have spent, particularly in company of other boats is what makes us put up with the rough times. One thing is for sure, we rarely come back without having had plenty of laughs and tales to talk over at future beach fires.

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SOCIAL NEWS: The next meeting we are pleased to have Mr. Jim Kirkhope from the Westernport Safety Council to give a talk on two-way radios, and demonstrate the use of them. We feel this will be most informative so don't miss out.

The last meeting for 1973 will be on Wednesday 28th November at the lower bar. This will be an informal meeting with all business over as quickly as possible, followed by supper with the bar open. Ladies we will be very disappointed if you don't come and hungry too, as we would like a plate from each of you. We hope the evening will be a pleasant end to 1973 as its been very strenuous getting the Association started but the teething pains are over (I hope) and as more boats become ready we should be able to mix some fun with the nitty gritty.

The Xmas break-up has been set for November 18th(Sunday 6pm. to 10.30pm.) and will-be held at Hunter's Lodge, 438 Dorset Road, Croydon. This is a German Restaurant and lots of fun. Prices are reasonable on Sundays prior to December so we felt a three course meal and dancing at \$4.00 per head was pretty good. Drink is available at lounge prices and finally, apologies to those of you who live on the other side of town, your turn next time. You may bring a party or I will arrange to seat you in a group so don't worry if you don't know anyone. Please return your acceptance by 11th of November so bookings may be finalised without chaos.