



RATLINES – APRIL 2024
The official newsletter of the
Wooden Boat Association of Cairns, Inc.
ABN 56 194 994 249

APRIL 2024 EDITION

Club and Association Status:

Insurance & Incorporation:

Up to date as per Committee Meeting Minutes.

Boatbuilding Projects:

Roger's Kiribati Tri.

There has been much head scratching and discussion over internal layout and setup of the rigging but things are settling into a gaff rig and having the steering position moved forward with a small wheel, to get a more comfortable position for Roger. He's big on comfort!!

The fore deck, gunwales and aft deck have been sanded back ready for a undercoating and the hatches on the foredeck have been fitted with new catches to hold them in place. With the wet weather it's not been possible to move the boat outside to check the folding arrangement for the outriggers, but the consensus is settling on the folding back as providing the most stable arrangement.





The Tri's spacious seating



Estimating the height of the boom



Redesigning the sail. Note the colour!

The 16' Skiff.

We think we have a buyer for the mast but the boat will remain as is, until after the move, and we know what the final arrangements are.

JW's Scruffy.

Has been launched and sails well. See the report on the "successful" launch at Lake Tinaroo.

Chris's pram dinghy: Is on hold while Chris is globe trotting.

Other projects

Iona has returned to workbay 1 to have some remedial work on her keel but will be back in the water shortly.



Once *Iona* is “fixed”, the space will be used to make the clubhouse table. The top and most of the supports have been cut and are ready to put together

Ongoing Maintenance and Improvements at the Clubhouse.

The grass is cut regularly and we are starting to look at sorting out items to sell or get rid of before the big move.

Chris, Dermot and Sheila have been busy planning a refurbishment of the clubhouse to allow the library to be moved into it. Sheila’s brilliant 3D computer images of the final layout met unanimous approval but a start date has yet to be announced.

Club Move Update.

Since we replied to Ports North with our amended layout, and they said they would cost it, we have not had an update. We regarded this reply as positive as the layout was not rejected out of hand and we are hopeful for a satisfactory response in the near future.

Club Happenings:

The Lake Tinaroo Gatherings have recommenced. These are irregular occurrences , approximately once a month, usually on a Thursday, and if you would like to come along contact Dermot or Roger via email.

Our Facebook Page:

Continues to be updated by Chris and is followed by many people around the world.

Our WBAC website: <https://www.woodenboatscairns.com.au>

Continually being updated by Sheila. Check out the latest update on the building of the Shimmy, Jaydubya.

A LAUNCH TO REMEMBER

The launch of John Willims' recently completed "Shimmy" sailing dinghy was a memorable event, held at Lake Tinaroo on Easter Saturday in challenging conditions.

John set up camp at the Tinaroo Sailing Club two days before the launch, to provide plenty of time to get the boat set up properly, become familiar with all the gear and prepare for his long-awaited maiden voyage. But the rain poured down relentlessly from the moment John arrived, so he spent two days and nights bailing out the boat and attempting to stay dry in his waterlogged tent – robbed of any opportunity to prepare the boat for the big occasion.

The rain mercifully stopped on Easter Saturday morning, replaced instead by a strong wind that howled through the lakeside gum trees and covered the water surface with stampeding white horses.

By 10 o'clock, a throng of more than 20 friends and well-wishers had gathered around the boat marvelling at the shining paint-work, the varnished silky oak gunnels, and the tan sails flogging in the breeze. Tom Sparks was on hand to help John step the mast, sort out the rigging, and install the rudder.



After much trial and error, with no shortage of helpful advice from the bystanders, the beautiful little boat was ready for the water. And so, in the long tradition of the Wooden Boat Club, it was declared time for coffee and cake!



Billies were boiled, thermos flasks were opened, and a variety of baked treats were shared around as the crowd gathered in front of John's tent. Dermot said a few words on behalf of the Club, congratulating John on completing his long-held dream of building his own sailing boat, while also battling several serious health issues. Dermot praised John for reaching out to the Club for assistance when his boat-building momentum stalled, and thanked the Club members who answered the call that ultimately made it possible to finish the boat. Dermot especially acknowledged the huge effort that Tom had put in over the last 12 months, along with Roger Fryer, Glen Chisholm, and Chris O'Keefe who all helped to bring John's dream to reality. John responded with heartfelt thanks to Tom and the others who had contributed their time, skills and knowledge week after week, including through the heat of the recent long summer. John thanked everyone for coming to the launch and looked forward to his sailing days ahead. And with that, launch time had finally arrived!



John backed his trailer to the water's edge, ably assisted by conflicting choruses of "left/right hand down a bit" from the eager crowd. The little Scruffy, named *Jaydubya* in honour of the builder himself, slid smoothly off the trailer and instantly looked at home afloat, bobbing impatiently on the water.

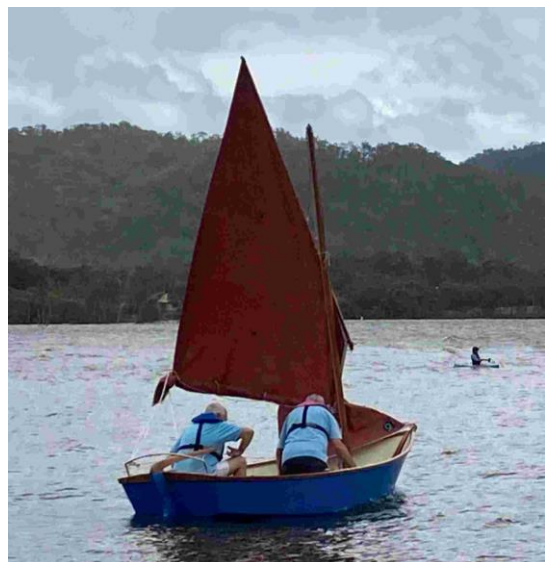


At this point, Robyn stepped forward, champagne bottle in hand, in what initially looked like the time-honoured tradition of christening the new craft. To everyone's surprise, especially John's, she appeared more inspired by the tradition of the Tour de France or Formula 1 as she shook the bottle and showered John from head to toe in frothy bubbly, while John pleaded for her to keep some for drinking!



This departure from maritime tradition may help explain what happened next. Partially blinded by the champagne, John invited Tom to take up his position as forward crew, clambered aboard, grabbed the tiller, and hauled in the mainsheet. Once the first gust hit the sails, the little boat sped off, not towards the sheltered waters in the bay beside the sailing club as had been soberly discussed and promised before the launch, but straight into the deep, heaving water and wild winds offshore. The crowd held its collective breath. The *Jaydubya* held a steady course at impressive speed, rapidly decreasing in size as she headed for the centre of the lake.

With no black box recorder on board, we don't know what was being said between the skipper and crew at this stage, but it's fair to guess that the topic of turning around might have come up. An attempt to go about would explain how both crew members found themselves on the same side of the boat just as a wind gust struck the taut mainsail and over she went.



For a brief moment, all that could be seen was the upturned blue hull of *Jaydubya*, alone on the troubled water. Very soon, however, one then two heads bobbed up and everyone breathed again. From the distance of the shore, it was hard to tell if the maiden voyagers were in any distress, though later John reported that he had been unable to locate the tag on his inflatable life jacket and that he had swallowed a lot of water!



Back on shore, Peter Whalley-Thompson launched a dinghy and headed for the sodden sailors.

Meanwhile, the crack Tinaroo Sailing Club rescue team had spotted the capsized, launched their high powered inflatable and were first to arrive on the scene. Which is probably just as well, because it took considerable effort by the two young Sailing Club rescuers, Benjamin Rankine and Lachlan Heath, to haul the two waterlogged *Jaydubya* crew into the inflatable. Once they had them safely (and gratefully) on board, Lachlan swam to the *Scruffy*, righted her, bailed out some of the water and headed her back towards the shore.



Five minutes later, the procession of three boats made it back to dry land. Barely a metre from the shore, and in front of the relieved (and OK, yes, slightly amused) crowd, John obligingly reprised his recent immersion by tipping gracefully over the side of the inflatable and momentarily disappeared under the water. Splutteringly he was helped onto dry land, while a remarkably smiling Tom made a more routine disembarkation.



Once everyone dried out and lunch was over, John declared that he was done with sailing for the day. However, Tom and Richard took the *Jaydubya* out for another gallop with the horses. This time they managed to reach the blustery centre of the lake, turn around, stay upright, and return to shore. To everyone's delight, they declared the boat to be a great little sailing vessel!

After the boat was de-rigged, and the crowd had thinned considerably, John replaced the rudder with his brand new Torqeedo electric outboard and set off towards the quiet waters of the nearby sheltered bay – shadowed by Dermot in *Jule* just in case. *Jaydubya* performed well under power and completed a lap of the bay without incident. It was a positive end to a memorable day, with John looking forward to his next opportunity to sail his dream boat under more favourable conditions.



Not so positive was Peter W-T's discovery that both his car and trailer were bogged in the squelchy ground near the water's edge. Right on queue, Benjamin Rankine turned up in his 4x4 to cheerfully perform his second rescue of the day. A fine example of the support provided by the community of boaties afloat and ashore. Thanks Benjamin!

Dermot Smyth, 4 April 2024

2024 GREAT TINAROO RAID

The 2024 Great Tinaroo Raid will be held at Tinaro Sailing Club from
Friday 16 to Sunday 18 August.

More details in future editions of *Ratlines*



Ladies and Gents, this concludes Ratlines for April 2024 and, as always, if there's more you want to see or know about please let us know by return email. Likewise, if you have a story or article you'd like included please send it to us at:

WBACairns@gmail.com

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Committee is: President- Roger Fryer;
Vice President- Chris O'Keefe (Ratlines & WBAC Facebook page);
Secretary- Dermot Smyth (and Librarian);
Treasurer- Brendon O'Rourke;
Committee- Tom Sparks, Sheila Sparks (website supervisor), Keven Muller, and Richard Heazlewood.

Website: <https://www.woodenboatscairns.com.au>

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WBAC's Cash For Containers number is: C10026463