

Membership Update: 31 members, including 2 new members in March

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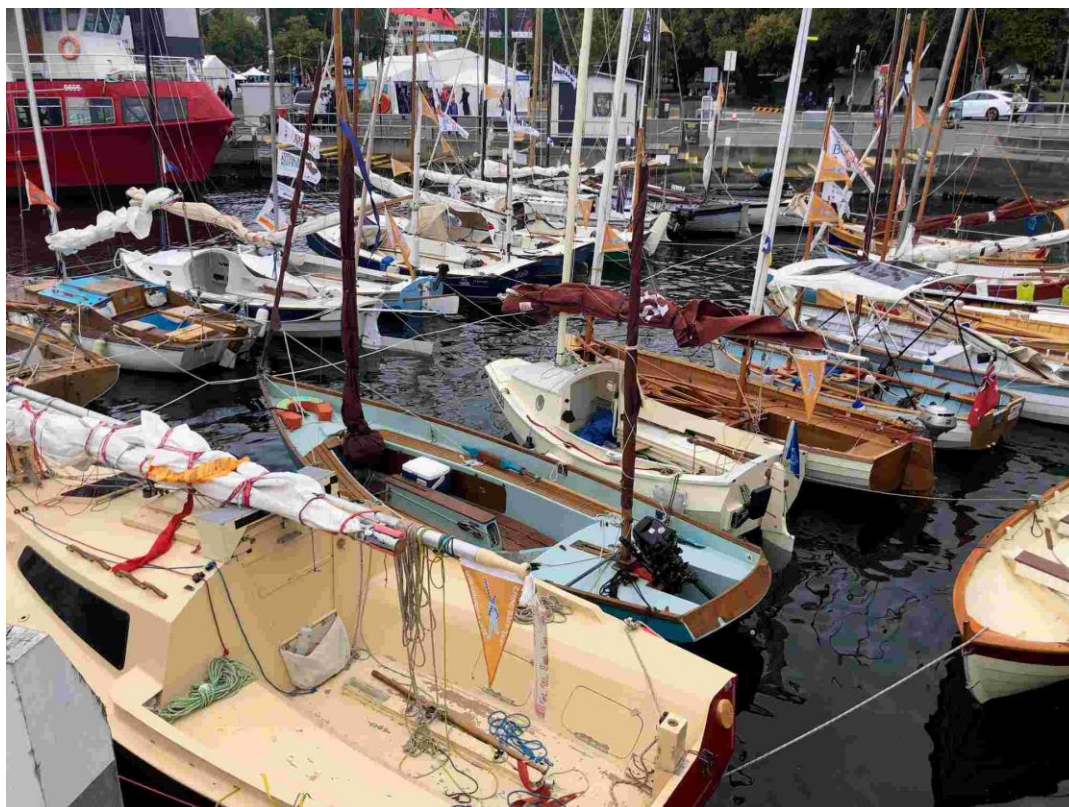
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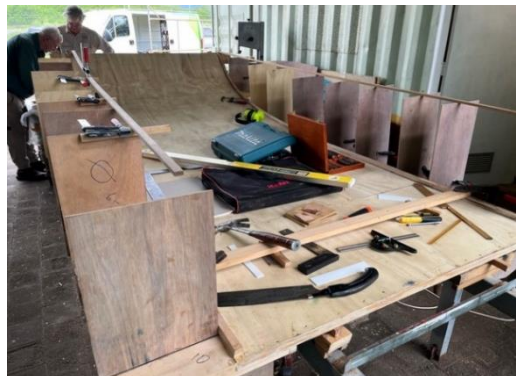


Wooden boats galore at the 2025 Australian Wooden Boat Festival in Hobart
Read all about it on page 7.

Project *SCOOP*

Chris reports on developments over the last month.....

Below are the latest shots of the frames being finalised prior to adding the external timber frame stiffeners.



Once the 18mm X 18mm stiffeners have been glued and secured on, then the frames will be glued and screwed into their final position. Then the chines, gunwales and stringers will be laid onto the frames.

The full-width kauri transom has been glued, dowelled and machined flat. Work has now commenced on fitting it onto the deck structure and incorporating it into the frames.

The whole construction looks very disjointed at the moment, which is understandable seeing as the construction is being carried out in a reverse manner and the design being modified as required. But fear not, it will all work out in the end!

And Richard provides a personal reflection on the project so far.....

Scoop continues to go ahead in leaps and bounds. I'm humbled by the expertise, enthusiasm and hard work put into the project by Chris and Tom. Their ability to pass on their practical skills and knowledge to the novice "apprentice" is greatly appreciated and reflects the ethos of the club.

The double layered ply floor is complete and the magnificent transom constructed by Chris will be a significant "WOW!" factor of the finished boat.

As the club is to be moved soon, we had a trial run of extending our work hours, but the midday heat and humidity took a toll on the senior workforce, so we have reverted to standard hours.

Peter and Cheryl Higgins have offered an old Johnson two stroke 15 Hp outboard for a trial when the boat is completed, which is greatly appreciated - especially after Peter puts his magic hands to servicing the old motor.



Roger reports on his *Bitaki Taari*

Lots of painting happening. The base for the mast and the horse for the boom have been installed. The latter nice and shiny after Tom was let loose on it. The floor panels were installed, with much head shaking and confusion over the little wooden twist locks. Luckily Keven had numbered them, but no-one knew from which end of the boat!!

The fuel tank and the battery have been purchased, so we made the supports for them, and painted them. The fuel tank sits nicely over the spray deflector on the port side to counterbalance the outboard on the starboard, and the battery sits in the stern compartment.

Painting the seats is complete and, after much consultation, Sheila and Roger agreed on the width of the “go faster” stripe on the amas, which Keven promptly painted. Needs another coat or two, but the boat looks faster already!



Next stop, the boat to be laid over and the hull given a final top coat and it “go-faster” stripe!



Mark reports on his rapidly emerging Rooftop Sailer

Well - the saying about boat building being ninety percent sanding, is holding true. I'm giving everything two coats of epoxy before assembly and painting happens.

The scale model I made before starting, really has been a help. It's much easier to visualise the how and where things are placed. It also works well as an aid to develop full scale shapes.

The inner and outer sides of the boat are cut and sanded to shape. Holes for the copper wire ties are drilled in them, ready for a stitch and glue session. The sides were used as a template for the shape of the mast step, and that now fits the base of the mast.



I've finished the rudder, rudder box and tiller assembly.

I bought your standard dinghy rudder brackets from Whitworths Marine. Ronstan sure don't miss you in the fittings department, that's for sure.



The bow of the boat is epoxied in place as a starting point for stitching the sides in place.



For a very simple boat, I find myself spending a lot of time (I should be sleeping) working out how to avoid a major stuff-up. Most building projects are the same, I guess. All part of the fun.

Till next time
Cheers Mark



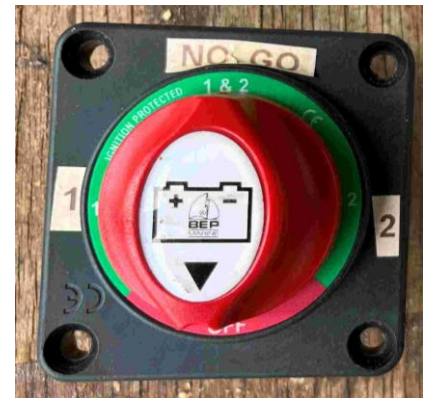
Dagger-board case, seat & storage assembly.

Oh - and I have had my time diverted, making a blanket box for a mate's teenage daughter.

Switching Switches on Joule

Dermot reports on the latest twist in the long and winding road to electric propulsion on his 5.5 metre Hartley Fisherman, *Joule*

When I initially set up the solar charging system for *Joule*'s two 100 ah lithium batteries, I searched for a switch that could connect the solar panels to either battery. The only battery switch I could find locally was one that had four positions: "OFF", "1", "2" and "1&2". I knew that lithium batteries don't like to be joined together in series or parallel, but went ahead and installed the switch and attached a (pathetically) optimistic "NO GO" sign at the 1&2 position – with the intention of replacing the switch later.



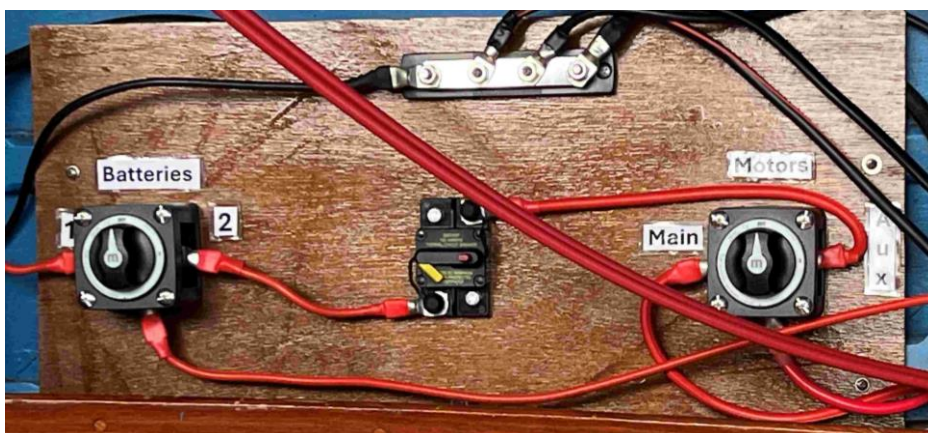
During last month's lake outing, while searching for the water drum lost when Richard's boat capsized, Roger turned the switch in haste from Battery 1 to Battery 2 via the 1&2 position – melting the 120 amp Anderson plug connecting Battery 1 to the main motor and breaking the circuit. This situation was easily rectified by connecting the Battery 2 Anderson plug to the main motor instead, and the search resumed.

That experience made it clear that installing a switch that didn't allow the two batteries to be connected was well overdue. Again I was unable to find a suitable switch locally, but I did find one online that provided only three positions – "OFF", "1" and "2".



Roger helpfully suggested that I could take this opportunity to avoid disconnecting and connecting Anderson plugs to switch between the batteries and switching between the main and auxiliary motors. Less confusion!

So I decided to purchase three of the 3-position switches – one for the solar charging system, one for the power source, and one for motor selection. I also decided to install a 100amp circuit breaker between the battery switch and the motor switch – giving me a simple and safe operation system which performed well on this month's lake outing.



Newly installed battery selection switch and motor selection switch, with the circuit breaker in between. The two red diagonal cables are the main motor throttle and gear control lines.



Solar charge controller with newly installed 3-position switch

Brendon relives his family trip to Green Island on his beautiful Hartley

On Xmas eve I took advantage of the fine weather and calm seas, to give the Hartley a good run to Green Island.

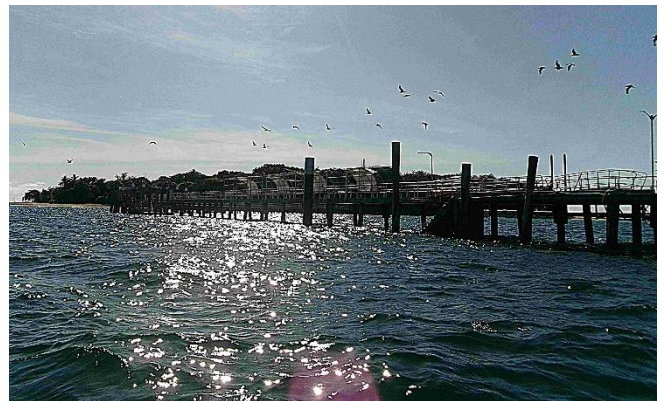
With my daughter and her partner up from Townsville, it was a good chance to check fuel economy and the new trim-tabs among other things.



With an early start to beat the heat, we headed out of Trinity Inlet and as we approached the Pier, I noticed a yachty in a small tender pulling his outboard repeatedly in the middle of the inlet. I thought if he is still pulling by the time I go past, I'll turn around and give him a tow. Which I did.

He was very thankful and said a few boats had gone past and not stopped. As I towed him to the Pier, he was already on the phone to the local marine dealer giving them a mouthful, as it was a brand new motor.

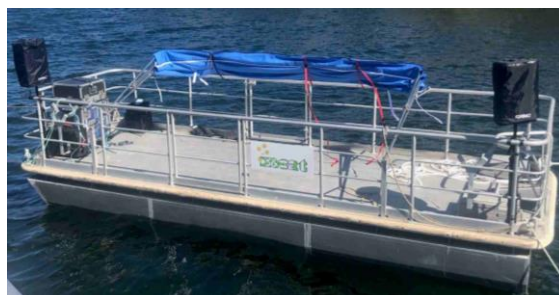
After the Hartley turned a few heads and a clap from the Pier, we got back on course. We arrived at Green Island about 8am, having a smooth run with some choppy water near the Island. All moorings were taken by other boats, so I kept the motor running as we had a bite to eat, and after few pics taken, we headed back to Cairns - trying out some trolling and bait fishing along the way, with no luck.



We then headed up the Inlet and tried a few more fishing spots, with only a few small fish caught and released. Eventually the heat got to us with little breeze and not much cover. We were home by lunch time having had a great morning out.

Australian Wooden Boat Festival report from Marc Richards, Tassie based WBAC life member

I was asked to design and facilitate a floating stage used for a small number of performers to entertain the crowds. The vessel came out pretty good for its intended use. The Festival organisers unfortunately didn't count on TasPorts who, at the last minute did not allow it to operate in the sheltered boat docks, so it was only occasionally used at the exposed ships pilot's pier. A bit disheartening to say the least.



As usual I volunteered during the Festival. Friday I spent 5 hours helping to dock the largest boats in strong winds after the Parade of Sails. Only a couple of collisions and copped a good dose of windburn. My volunteering the next day undercover at the Classic Dinghy display was most welcome.

Festival theme this time was Boats and Seafarers of the South Pacific. Within the NZ and Pacific nations precinct and afloat at Kings Pier were the latest designs and restored vessels featured alongside traditional craft, such as outriggers and proas.



**Te Uira under sail built 1896. I think
best classic boat at the AWBF**

Even though the festival is over 4 days it's difficult to view all the events you might want to see, so if you have a chance to attend you need to plan well ahead. There are all manner of wooden boats from surfboards to dinghies to trailer sailers and so on. A bit overwhelming at times.

There are on-water events leading up to the Parade of Sails to start the Festival such as a 3 day sail and overnight camping 'Raid' and then during the next 3 days there were sailing and rowing class races including a rematch between an Australian and Kiwi boat held 90 years since they last raced.

The free symposium was fantastic with talks by designers John Welsford and David Paine, a number of ocean passage adventurers as well as YouTube celebrity boat builders being TallyHo rebuild (Leo Goolden) & the new build Tarkine. John Welsford designed boats were everywhere showing their popularity as trailable and super-safe sailing boats.

There were a number of documentary movies shown, an indoor classic dinghy and light craft display, model sail racing boats and boat models to view. Short boatbuilding and wood craft courses were held in various locations such as the Shipwright's village.



Modern asymmetric catamaran



**Happy Feet a John Welsford
'Penguin' design**



**Miniscule - when you can only afford a
small tug boat**



Skin-on-frame dinghy

LAKE REPORT

Electrifying Excursion to Kauri Creek

A late, and at the time courageous, decision by Dermot and Roger to brave the weather and have a day on the lake, meant a relatively small turn-out. As it happens, the weather was the least of the problems.

Roger was determined to give his new 6hp Tohatsu outboard a good run-in, and had strengthened *Brahminy's* transom to take it. Dermot was keen to test out his new boarding ladder and trial *Joule's* new battery/motor switching arrangements.

Dermot had an event-free trip to the lake with *Joule*, but Roger, after stopping to pick up some fuel for the outboard, noticed that the vehicle steering was shaking and, after pulling over, discovered a trailer tyre well on the way to self-destruction. Large amounts of rubber were missing, but luckily it was still inflated.

A quick tyre change revealed that the spare was a little down on pressure, (something that never happens!). Consequently, a slow trip to the nearest servo and use of their air supply was needed. What is usually an hour-and-a-half trip taking two hours. Roger was late again!



Meanwhile, Keven and John (Breen) turned up, with Glen towing his *Flatty* not far behind. While they were waiting for Roger to turn up, Glen launched and prepared his boat for a rowing trip and Kevin and John amused themselves by watching Dermot test out the boarding ladder he'd built in response to the difficulty getting Richard on board *Joule* after his capsized last month.

The ladder was designed to hang off *Joule's* stern, tethered on each side to cleats in the outboard well and the starboard deck respectively, with the weight of ladder and climber shared by the transom and the lattice boarding plate.



To watch a video of Dermot's James-Bond-like ascent from the water go to:
<https://share.icloud.com/photos/0012t5ktMoOBVHy-U-TWVYlmg>

It worked! And when not required for reboarding semi-aquatic mammals, the ladder stows neatly under the seats at the rear of the cabin.

This version of the ladder was a proof-of-concept model built using cheap lengths of Bunnings pine. After the successful test, John kindly offered to provide Dermot with some superior timber for the next version.



When Roger with *Brahminy* in tow finally turned up, he was in serious need of a coffee, as was Dermot after his ladder exertions, and Glen, John and Keven were happy to join in.

Suitably recaffeinated, Roger, with Keven's help, mounted the outboard onto *Brahminy*'s transom, connected the necessary fuel line etc., and gave the starter cord its first pull. It instantly burst into life - brilliant!



"Hello", says Keven, in a worried voice, "There's no water coming out the tell-tale"! As usual, Keven was right. A little dribble emerged and promptly turned to steam. Not good! Roger quickly pressed the kill switch, and poked wire into the cooling water outlet to determine that a mud wasp was not the problem. Another start and quick circle in slow forward also resulted in no cooling water flow, so the motor was quickly stopped again.



Hmmm. Check the manual - the instructions were, "Stop engine and inform dealer" – great advice, but useless at the time, so the outboard was "unshipped" and the run-in was over before it started.

Dermot suppressed the temptation to comment on the unreliability of petrol motors and volunteered his spare 2 kw electric Pelican outboard (approx. 5hp) and 50 ah battery to fit on *Brahminy*. A couple of minutes of work and *Brahminy* was successfully electric-powered.

Kauri Creek was the destination of choice for a picnic lunch, but Glen was a little concerned about the distance, probably wisely. He elected to stay in the bay adjacent to the Sailing Club, where he had no problems rowing and motoring *Flatty* around the bay in gentle conditions. The rest decided to make a dash for Kauri Creek and then return to have lunch with Glen at the Sailing Club. Glen was asked to carry his mobile phone with him in case the all-electric fleet needed rescuing!

Setting off smartly in the now near-silent *Brahminy*, Roger and Keven were soon followed, and overtaken, by Dermot and John in *Joule*. Roger found the experience of speed in *Brahminy* rather exhilarating as he could actually keep up with *Joule*. (Not something usually possible with the steam engine). Check out the video of Roger and Keven hooning along in *Brahminy* at: <https://share.icloud.com/photos/0b0Jb-SY1vUmKuOYoYILgm7Bw>



After an incident-free 20-minute transit of the lake, the entry to Kauri Creek proved spectacular. John knows the area well, and guided the boats further up the creek than the rest would have thought possible or prudent. At slow speed, the electric motors are very flexible, and ideal for following a winding creek through the rainforest. A magical experience – with the prospect of encountering Humphrey Bogart at the helm of *African Queen* at any moment. A 3-point turn was required to turn around, moving slowly and gently on the way out, next to the ducks, past the flowering waterlilies and monitored by a circling goshawk.



Nature called for a quick stop at the Kauri Creek day-use area, then hunger prevailed, and the boats headed back for lunch.



Roger and Dermot agreed that *Joule* should lead the way out of the creek, piloted by John, after which *Joule* would follow *Brahminy* back to the Sailing Club in case the 50 ah battery, which by this time was at 56% charge, ran out of electrons. A perfect plan, which would have worked well had Dermot not forgotten it by the time *Joule* was back in the lake and blissfully continued forging ahead.

Eventually Dermot began to wonder why *Brahminy* was falling behind, and then his phone rang. It was Roger. "What's happening?", says Dermot. "Nothing. That's the problem" replied Roger. "Ahh", says Dermot, "We'll be back", quoting a famous American General!



Easy done. *Joule* circled back, a towline was passed, and Keven and Roger sat back to watch the world go by as *Joule* towed them quietly back to the Sailing Club. They passed the time by discovering that changing seat positions caused *Brahminy* to change its towing angle. Something to do with weight distribution and physics!



Safely back onshore, Glen had done his dash around the bay, loaded his trailer, and, like a gentleman, waited for the Kauri Creek crew to return before starting a late lunch.



The world's problems were lamented, but not solved, and Roger confessed to seriously considering converting *Brahminy* to electric power, using an inboard motor - but *Bitaki Taari* has to be finished first! After lunch, the boats were put on trailers and various bits of borrowed equipment given back to their owners. Goodbyes were shortened as the rain began, to end an eventful but fun-filled day. Kauri Creek is definitely worth another visit.

Roger & Dermot 28 March 2025

Peter Rountree comments on an article on the ketch *Arita* in the latest edition of *Southern Boat Sailing*.....

Background:

Arita was a 47ft ketch build by Dick McIlvride in the late 1950s in New Zealand from a single 700 year old Kauri Pine tree. *Arita* circumnavigated NZ in the company of the 45ft timber cutter *Treasure*, built by John Guzzwell who wrote *Trekka Round the World* about his earlier solo circumnavigation in his 20ft timber yawl *Trekka*. Read the story at:

[The Wooden Yacht ARITA — Southern Woodenboat Sailing](#)

Peter writes:

Thankyou for the story on *Arita*. She was in Lyttelton (NZ) with *Treasure* while we were building our Spencer 40 in Christchurch, about 1970. They were both magnificent examples of their owner/builders' craftsmanship.

John Guzzwell's book, *Trekka Round the World* is available on Amazon. Although it didn't say so in the book, he worked for Dick McIlvride in Opua during his circumnavigation on *Trekka*. He wrote about a dinghy to fit on the coach roof, and I copied the idea for my current boat, *Peridot*.

Trekka was one of many cruising books I read in my teens and certainly inspired me to go cruising. It was the inspiration for a current round the world race, following in her wake.



Arita



Treasure



Trekka

A Gem of a Jewellery Box

Chis shares a heartfelt project he's been working on at home.....



Another small project I've been working on is a jewellery box for my adopted daughter, currently a bush nurse in one of the remote communities in the NT. It's made from Huon Pine and Teak, lined with red felt and contains a small German music box machine and a carved Ivory Nut turtle. Ivory Nut Palms are native to the Micronesian Islands where we purchased it several years ago.



The heart pendant on the underside of the lid frames the letter L, and Lynda is the young lady concerned. Jan is travelling down to NSW to present it to her personally. She is a very special young woman to us, and has had to deal with many tragedies and problems over the past decade, yet still fronts up to help people.

The box itself is based on the art deco period from a century ago, and also has a part of my history included. Underneath the removable tray is one of my old Warrant Officer's collar badges as a personal, and historical, signature.



The Big Move

Roger reports on preparing for rapidly approaching relocation!

No further news from Ports North re the Big Move, but we have started preparations. A good turnout for an initial working bee meant that the years of accumulated material on the top of the containers was brought down, checked and sorted. Several items that have “never been used” were found and some given new homes, others put in the trailer for the dump.

The steering oars for the Croc Boats were found and will be taken up to the Herberton Historic Village to be reunited with the boats. Luis, Brendon and Brian sorted out the inside of Container 3, and secured the shelves to prevent stuff falling off.

We now know which container is which, thanks to Glen and Chris. Chris produced numbered stencils (1-4), and Glen found some dodgy dark grey paint and did the numbering. No more confusion.

Our solar powered battery system, (not the actual Solar System, which is a bit bigger!), is being donated to the Yungaburra Landcare Group, once it has been disconnected from the mains (we think this is a good idea!). They will remove it and use it to charge their battery powered tools in their powerless shed.

According to the project schedule, we need to be ready to move by the end of April, early May, so there is still plenty to do, and there will be a big push on the last weekend in April to lift and stack the pavers.

Ladies and Gents, this concludes *Ratlines* for March 2025 and, as always, if there's more you want to see or know about, please contact us 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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WBAC's Cash For Containers number is:

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