



## **RATLINES – MARCH 2023**

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

## **WBAC's APRIL EDITION**

### **Club and Association Status:**

**The Ports North Master Plan:  
Insurance & Incorporation:**

Status quo remains unchanged..  
Up to date..

### **Boatbuilding Projects:**

**Brendon's Hartley:** Brendon recently brought her into the clubhouse to show her off. Not long now until she is fully complete. He also advises that she has now completed her water tests on Cairns inlet and 'went like a dream'.



### **Roger's Kiribati Tri:**

BT now has her bottom intact, with the last of the sheeting installed. Trimming of the ply, filling and fairing is next, then epoxy sheathing.



### **The 16' Skiff:**

It was decided at the March committee meeting to offer her to any club member for free. If nobody takes her, the plan is to mount her on the side of the new container as a very visible advertisement of our club. It should be noted that she does have some rot in her keel and has no sails or rigging.

### **JW's Scruffy:**

Both inner and outer gunwales have been installed.



A recent photo. More has been done, but glueing has been hampered by clamp numbers... she's awaiting her move to workbay 1.



### **The Dragon Boat:**

The new gunwales have been installed, which completes WBAC's component in the restoration project. She now returns to her normal berth for the rest of her restoration.



All masked up and stickyflexed!



All hands ready to install...



Glued and clamped in position, job done!!

### **And Now, Episode 3 of ... *Dermot's Grand Experiment:***

- *Where Dermot realizes the extent of research and development that goes into a successful marry-up of boat design and technology...*

A further description of the water test (well, one of them at least...) at Lake Tinaroo is included later on in this bulletin, but essentially the main messages are that forward propulsion is satisfactory, while the electric motor is currently under performing in reverse, a situation which will hopefully will be reversed with a larger propeller. Backup trolling motor is powering the boat well - in both directions. 48 volt 100Amp-hour Lithium battery seems to provide adequate range.

Water-cooled electric motor running an outboard – what's next, electronic maps on your phone??!!



### **Updates still coming soon on:**

- Arend's John Welsford Pelegrin that's approaching completion. (Once we get the through-build photos..)
- And a few more photos of my pram dinghy's transformation. (Once I get rid of the forty thousand 'other projects' I'm juggling..)

### **Ongoing Maintenance and Improvements at the Clubhouse:**

Some realignment still to be done on clubhouse doors & windows.

Roger's great work with the council has paid off in spades. In fact the council arrived this month with spades and excavated the footpath in preparation for installing a driveway!! The rain chased them away for a while, but they eventually got the concrete laid, very nice.

Footings for the new container will be set up soon, weather permitting. The container is currently sitting in the compound (which incidentally reduces the mowing area). Likewise, a new boundary fence around the carpark will soon be installed... by us.

Pics below show the driveway and carpark progress.



Roger imitating a worker..



..and a bit more parking gravel added as well!

Construction has also commenced on a cleanup & emergency eyewash station adjacent to the side entry doors at the back of Workbay 1 with Keven well advanced into paving, plumbing & welding.

### **Club Happenings:**

#### **The 2023 Great Tinaroo Raid:**

#### **New dates confirmed:**

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August. Main events on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August.

Look out for further details in future editions of *Ratlines*



## Transportation to Van Diemen's Land?



After many years in Cairns, (some might say too many to mention!!), Marc Richards and Marcia have committed themselves to self-exile on the little island at the bottom of Australia. Not quite as far as Macquarie, but nearly as cold. We are not sure if this is to escape the heat or for the original reasons people were sent to Tasmania. The active wooden boat scene and huon pine might also have something to do with it.

Marc has been a stalwart of the WBAC for more than 20 years and must be one of the earliest members. He served on the committee for many years and was President for the crucial years when severed ties with the Cairns Maritime Museum and gained a direct lease from Ports North.

Many of the improvements around the club are due to Marc, from paving the work bay to the roofs, designing and fitting

the end walls. Ask him about something, and he will be back with a drawing and ideas of how to do it. His training as a Naval (Chris wanted me to spell it Navel!!) Architect made him invaluable when boat designs were discussed and I owe him a huge debt (more than the bottle of red I bought him), for designing the folding mechanism for my trimaran.

His ability to source materials and machinery at little or no cost has saved the club many dollars over the years, while his taller than average trestles have saved our dodgy backs.



Marc's enthusiasm and commitment to the club cannot be overstated. He will be missed, but as he has been made a life member, he cannot escape our clutches completely. (Perhaps Macquarie Island might have done it!).



We wish him and Marcia all the best for their time in Tasmania and expect reports in *Ratlines* of boating exploits.



## **A Tale of Two Leaks (not the Welsh ones!)**

It was a dark and stormy night, so hopes were not high for a good day at the lake, but dawn came dry and with a hint of blue. So the mob, desperate for some boating time, set forth, fifth and probably sixth!

As usual, Tom and Sheila were the early birds, rigging *Iona* for her first dip since Tom did the repairs. Mark Heaton had launched *Om Toch* already and Dermot was ready to launch the recently electrified *Jule* by the time Roger dawdled in with *Brahminy*. (Blaming the road works as usual). Richard Heazlewood was already there with a very smart rowing skiff, looking for some advice on a replacement, Glen brought his Bunnings tarp-powered outrigger canoe and Keven, John Todd, John Williams and Jim McAlister arrived soon after. A full crew indeed.

The weather gods smiled on us, it was overcast but with a nice breeze to keep the sailors happy, and no rain.

Dermot launched *Jule* successfully and he and Richard gave us a quiet demonstration of *Jule's* ability under electric power. She looked to be quicker than with the dodgy Suzuki motor, and sat better in the water, but range anxiety set in early when the battery meter estimated that a 10 minute cruise had used 20% of the available power. Luckily this proved incorrect – the battery remained at 80% charge by the end of the day after several more test runs.



Coffee and cake were taken early and then Mark and Keven took *Om Toch* out, shortly followed by *Iona*. Roger lit a fire in *Brahminy*, started the trusty Seagull auxiliary, and settled down to wait for steam pressure. Glen set sail with the blue tarp pulling strongly. He looked good, tacking and turning but he was not happy with the position of the leeboard. Apparently, this varies depending on the strength of the breeze - arcane sailing knowledge well beyond the author's ken.



Mark and Keven enjoying fine sailing conditions in *Om Toch*.



The good ship *Iona* in full flight .



Glen coming into shore after a good run

Meanwhile, Dermot had bailed out *Jule* and had removed the second battery in an attempt to find an elusive leak. This had been worrying him for a while, as well as slowly sinking the boat. What's to worry about?! With the bilges bailed out and exposed, a very small fountain of water could be seen seeping through an empty screw hole in a stringer. One screw later, and the hole was plugged. Now Dermot had just to find the hole on the outside to do a permanent repair. He also had to fix the "house" (non-propulsion) electrics, but that is another story!

A plume of steam announced that *Brahminy* was ready, so with John T at the helm, Roger took her out for the first time since the Raid. She behaved herself well and after a good warm up cruise came back in, with Roger thinking of lunch.

Not to be. Mark and Jim were interested in a trip around the bay, so after building up the fire, Roger took them out. All was going well until the turn around point, when a sudden hiss proclaimed a steam leak. The engine was still running, but unable to find the leak, and concerned for safety, Roger shut down the steam feed and turned to the trusty Seagull to get back to shore.



When Roger was exhausted, Mark took over trying to get it to start. (It was noticeable that there was no flurry of assistance from the rest of the mob. Too busy with lunch). Eventually, the motor coughed, hiccupped, started, and *Brahminy* was heading back to lunch. Jim meanwhile was busy pumping to keep the water level up in the boiler. Never a dull moment on a steam launch.



After a late lunch, Glen fitted his electric outboard to Richard's rowing skiff and they took it out for a gentle run, with Richard balancing precariously on the seat and Glen lying on the floor to keep the weight down low. Proving that without the oars, the skiff is rather tender, and helping Richard to make the decision to get a more stable craft.



All the sailors headed out for another run, while Roger went out with Dermot in Jule to see if the range could be determined. Stopping a couple of times to swap between the main electric outboard, and the smaller back-up trolling motor, cruising past *Iona* to check they were OK. (Twice!) Using the auxiliary electric motor and trying various power settings, it started to confirm the idea that pushing to get anything more than hull speed reduced the range dramatically. Lots of fun to be had in the future trying various things to get the best out of these motors.

With so many boats and people there, it was a long exhausting day, but lots of fun and lots of hands to help get boats onto trailers and provide advice, whether needed or not.

Wisdom of the Elders --->>

**Afternote:** Both leaks were located and relatively easily fixed, so the next trip should be known for something else breaking down.

*Roger Fryer, 20 Mar 2023*



### **Boat kits available from WBAC**

We have a Puddleduck Racer boat kit that was donated by Doctor Tom's family, and it is highly unlikely that we will build it. It would be a great grandfather/grandson type of project, and it is available free to a club member.

The **Puddleduck Racer** is quite unique, an easy build, and looks like a lot of fun. If anyone is interested, please let Roger, Chris or Dermot know.

The website that covers its details and build plans is

<https://www.pdracer.com>





## **Our Facebook Page:**

We get quite regular feedback and comments on each post, and the lists of people that like & comment is pleasing, especially the ones from various like-minded organisations.

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

Continually being updated by Sheila..

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Ladies and Gents, this concludes Ratlines for April, 2023 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](mailto:WBACairns@gmail.com)

Chris O'Keefe

Resident expert on scarphing & scarpering.

**Clubhouse:** 68 Tingira Street, Portsmith, (Cairns) Qld 4870

**Committee is:** President- Roger Fryer;  
Vice President- Chris O'Keefe  
Secretary- Dermot Smyth (and Librarian);  
Treasurer- Brendon O'Rourke;  
Committee- Tom Sparks, Sheila Sparks (website supervisor), Marc Richards, and Keven Muller.

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**WBAC's Cash For Containers number is:** C10026463

Finally, a couple of photos that that typify our recent month's works:



A nice photo of a scarph, varnished:



Container footings holes...