



RATLINES – OCTOBER 2025

The official newsletter of the
Wooden Boat Association of Cairns, Inc.

ABN 56 194 994 249

Membership Update: 34 members

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INVITATION TO WBAC AGM & CHRISTMAS LUNCH TINAROO SAILING CLUB SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER



WBAC members are invited to attend our Annual General Meeting at 11:30am on Saturday 6th December at the Tinaroo Sailing Club, followed by Christmas Lunch for members and guests at 12:30.

A catered buffet comprising hot roast turkey, ham and beef, accompanied by gourmet salads & vegetables, followed by a selection of desserts will be served in the Tinaroo Sailing Club clubhouse, with gluten free options for each course.

The cost per head is \$45.

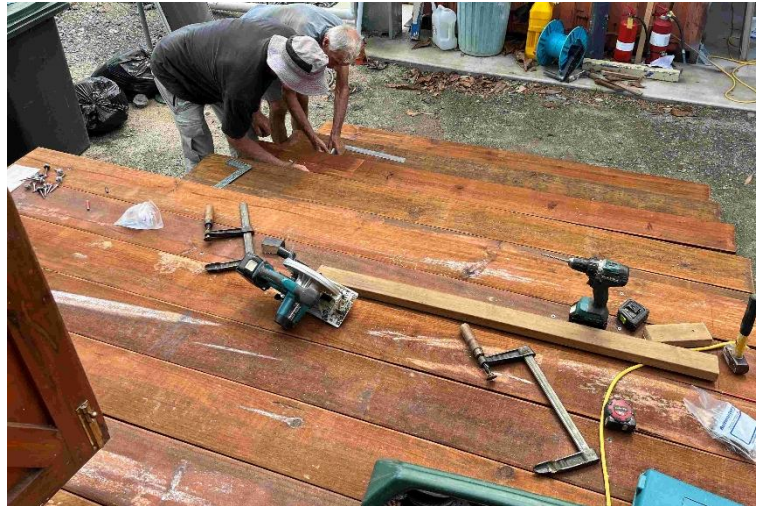
Please pay for you and your guest(s) by **Friday 21st November** to the following Bank of Queensland account:

Account Name: Wooden Boat Association of Cairns Inc.
BSB Number: 124976
Account Number: 100053156
Reference: "Lunch" x number of people

CLUBHOUSE STEPPING UP

Club Premises Redevelopment

It is now safe to ascend to the heady heights of the clubhouse, thanks to a mighty effort by Roger and Keven, with help from Luis and others. The verandah and steps have been installed, after much measuring, remeasuring and then again 'cos we lost the bit of paper with the numbers scrawled on it! All the timber was termite treated and given a coat of oil preservative. Looks good and has Glen's approval as easy to ascend!!



The plan for the covered way between the club house and shed was drawn in 3D by Sheila and given the club's endorsement. This has been sent to Ports North for their approval, as per the lease agreement. Final construction details are still being debated (argued!)

The lease has been scanned, perused, checked and signed in the presence of a JP by the President and Secretary. This is a 3-year lease, with virtually the same conditions as before. So, a BIG improvement over the month by month lease we had at the old site.

The electrical layout for the shed has been simplified to allow more flexibility and take into account the height, airiness and light inside the structure. The electrician is expected on Tuesday 28th to review the work required.

Tom, with help from John Pullar, has started sanding and painting the outside of the clubhouse, Keven and Brian have installed the window awnings, and Brendan has started transferring the Wooden Boat Association sign from one side of the building to the other so it will be visible from the main road.



It is starting to come together. A big thank you to everyone for putting in the work to get this far this quickly.

PROJECT SCOOP

Richard reports on recent progress

Changes in design and building approach have all worked well. Chris is very happy with the progress and reasonably happy with the support team of Tom and Richard as we all work together very well.



The keel timber has been glued and screwed. After much trial and error, the chines will be laminated to allow for the shape of the hull. The first chine timbers have been glued into place.



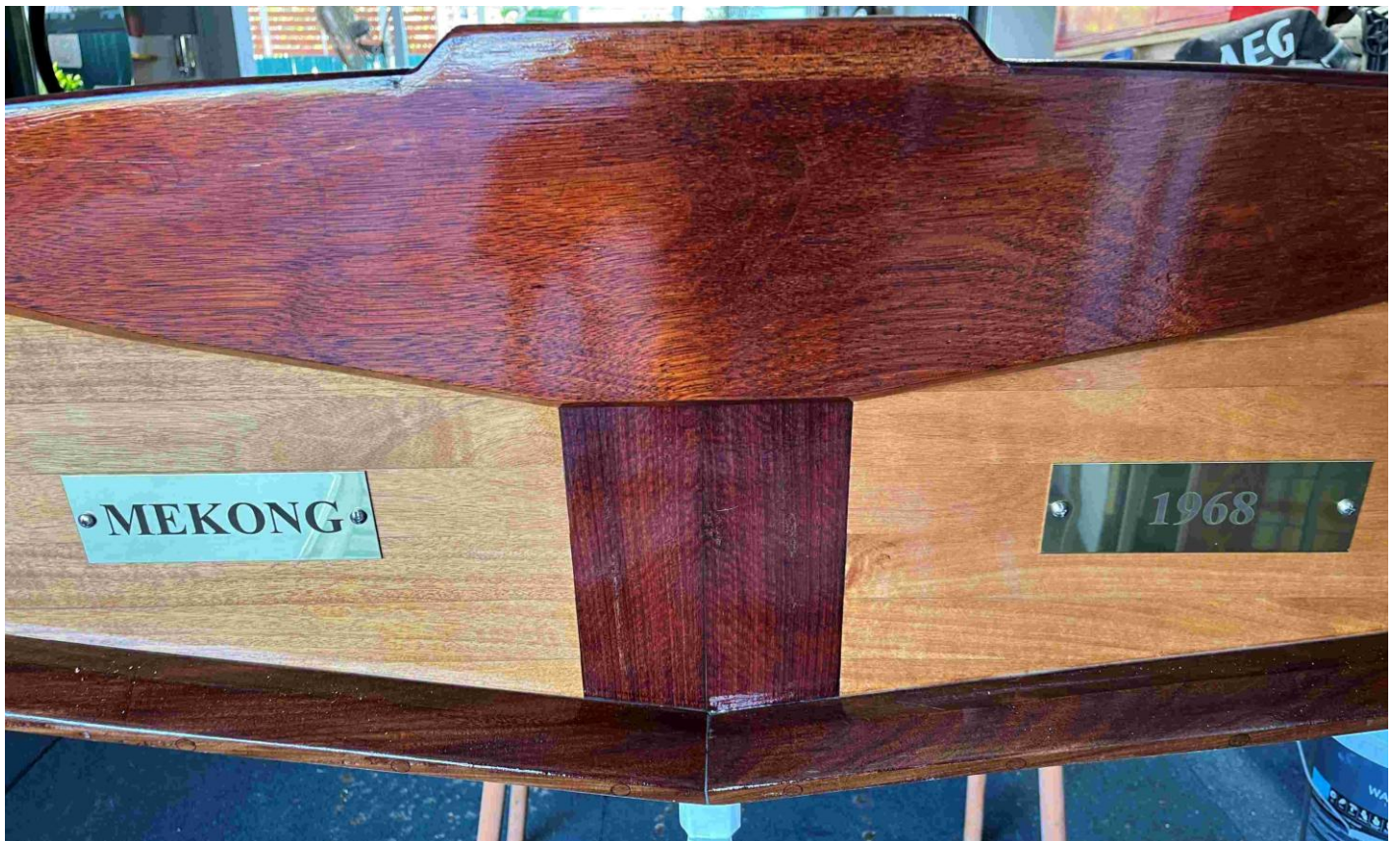
She now looks more like a boat, and the marine ply skin is not far away.

Chris may take some time off as he embarks on the next stage of his treatment journey and the whole club wishes him well and any support we can give.

MEKONG UPDATE

Mekong is almost finished and looking fantastic – a marvellous achievement by Chris, bringing together a lifetime of experience, skill and attention to detail against considerable odds. Congratulations Chris!!





Tinaburra and No Tows!

Lake Outing from Tinaburra, Thursday 23rd October

For a change of venue, Tinaburra boat ramp near Yungaburra was a pleasant surprise. A proper boat ramp led into the water with a grassy shore on either side. Of course, we didn't use the boat ramp, preferring the wider spaces and room to rig the boats without then having to maneuver onto the ramp.



We think everyone found their way there, though not knowing how many were expected means that there could be someone still towing a boat around the back streets of Yungaburra!! Roger found it confusing, complicated by an unsatisfactory diversion, then finding a toilet block closed, necessitating a rapid move to the next one.

With military precision, nearly all arrived at the appointed hour, Mark with *Zig Zag*, Roger with *Bitaaki Taari*, Dermot with *Joule*, Tom and Kevin with *Iona* and Glen with *Flatty*.



Richard had arranged to meet a potential buyer for *Ninanji*, but, true to form, managed to talk them out of buying it.

Allan and Marge arrived to view the flotilla and helped set up and stayed for coffee only once we set sail.



Our little fleet attracted some attention from the boaties around the ramp. Not often there are that many “odd” wooden boats in one place.

After we had re-cafeinated and demolished Dermot’s cupcakes, a gentle breeze started up. Just enough to fill the sails, so sailing we went. From Tinaburra, the lake heads more or less north-easterly, and of course the breeze was down the lake. So, it was tacking practice for Roger, who had never handled *Bitaaki* on his own before, and found managing 3 ropes and the tiller with only 2 hands, a matter of co-ordination that took time to “perfect”!!! Not quite. However, the practice was very good for Roger to get confidence in handling her and that *Bitaaki* would go about reliably, even at low speed, something that trimarans are not noted for.



Roger is sure that Mark in *Zig Zag*, with years of sailing experience, took only half as many tacks to get up the lake as Roger did. He thought he was going to keep up. NO! *Iona*, with two people on board and a deeper hull, fared even worse in the very light breeze and Roger, not being competitive at all, was pleased to come in second! (If 2 boats are a race, 3 are definitely a race!!)



Dermot and Richard, in the meantime, had taken *Joule* on an exploration of the lake to find future potential lunch spots, and left the sailors to their own devices, enjoying the scenes of nature and agriculture that typify the Lake Tinaroo experience.



Mark went ashore at a shady spot, sensibly deciding not to catch up with *Joule* in the light breeze, so we all nudged ashore next to *Zig Zag*. Glen joined us after being delayed by a hard-to-start outboard and equipped with a back-up Bunnings spinnaker.





No-one had brought lunch, Richard was concerned he had left his car unlocked and Mark had an appointment to fit some shelves, so as soon as *Iona* arrived, we turned around and headed back for lunch.

Downwind this time and with a zephyr of a breeze, the sailors managed to keep the boats moving, just. *Iona* showed she is better downwind, as *Bitaaki* struggled to keep up, and Mark was well away.

Lunch on a shady table was a pleasant affair, and soon after, Richard took to his natural environment and only his head was seen above water.

Dermot was keen to show Roger his reversing accelerator, so a few minutes were spent going backwards and forwards in *Joule*. Amazing what can be done with a small chain and length of cord!



With Richard deciding to give *Ninanji* a row to celebrate the non-sale, the sailors de-rigged their boats while Dermot took *Joule* for a jaunt up the inlet next to Tinaburra to burn off some electrons, before all the boats were loaded back on their trailers for the journey home.

The weather was Tablelands perfect, the breeze just enough (only just), and with good company, the day was deemed an enjoyable success.



16 ft Hartley Trailer Sailer

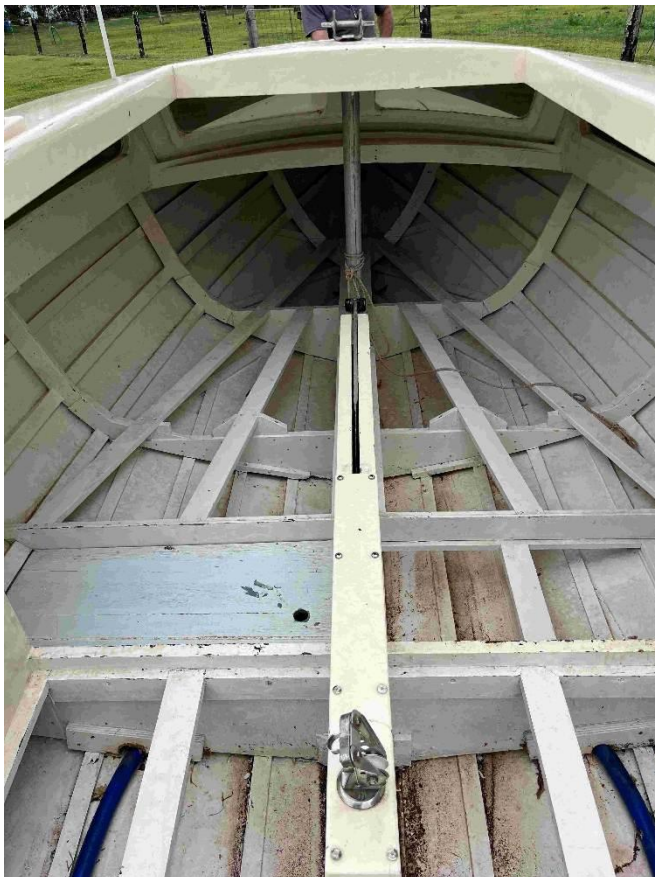
Including rigging, sails, rudder, centreboard and registered trailer

Price: Open to offers

Location: Upper Barron, 10 minutes from Atherton.

Contact Deb on phone 0428421852 or email: deborahgrant2@outlook.com.au





Floorboards, centreboard, rudder, mast and sails are stored in a shed

Ladies and Gents, this concludes *Ratlines* for October 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

Clubhouse: 6 MSQ Access Road, Portsmith, (Cairns) Qld 4870

Committee is: President- Roger Fryer;

Vice President- Chris O'Keefe (WBAC Facebook page);

Secretary- Dermot Smyth (Librarian & *Ratlines*);

Treasurer- Brendon O'Rourke;

Committee- Tom Sparks, Sheila Sparks (website supervisor),

Keven Muller, and Richard Heazlewood.

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WBAC's Cash For Containers number is: C10026463