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President's Pronouncements:

Yep, I've changed this column to give the President the opportunity for a brief word in each newsletter because I figure the Editor really doesn't need to say anything.

I hope you all had a really good Christmas and that Santa brought you lots of goodies.

We're off to a flying start this year with several events on the calendar, so I hope you take advantage of them and pack the boat and family up and join in. We all know that apart from being a good excuse to get the boat out, they are also great fun.

Happy and safe boating and remember, keep talking to me . . .

Greg

Coming Events

January 2009

- Australia Day Regatta. International Rowing Course, Penrith, NSW. 26th. For details, contact Dave Pagano on 0413 766 501 or davehotboats@hotmail.com

February 2009

- Australian Wooden Boat Festival. Hobart, Tasmania. 6th - 9th. For details, contact info@australianwoodenboatfestival.com.au

- Hammond Reunion, Take 2. 15th. Dargle, NSW. Contact Di on hammond-boats@bigpond.com or 0418 622 120. CAWPBA members and their boats are welcome to participate.

- Committee Meeting, 20th, Melbourne (venue and times TBA) .

- Proposed Victorian Branch Club Day. Lake Glenmaggie. 28th. To be confirmed. Note that if the day at Glenmaggie doesn't happen (probably due to water levels), we will then start looking at a weekend on the Gippsland Lakes at Paynesville, most likely in late March. Contact Greg on 0408 937 029 or gca42796@bigpond.net.au

Around the Traps

General:

- The club committee was elected in at the AGM at Narrandera in October last year. The committee make-up remained the same except for the election of Alan Price to the position of Secretary. Congratulations Alan.

- Remember that this newsletter is also available in colour. It is in MS Word format and will be emailed out to you on request. Contact me on gca42786@bigpond.net.au for your copy.

Queensland and Western Australia:

- We are currently looking for a local rep in these states to raise the profile and awareness of the club. I have many contacts in each state to assist you. If you are interested in taking on this role, please contact Greg on 03 937 029.

South Australia:

- Colin Bailey has sold his Lewis runabout *Hi-Fi*. The new owner had pestered Colin for some considerable time before Colin gave in. The boat debuted for most of us at Narrandera last year and is a fine example of a twin cockpit Lewis. *Hi-Fi* will remain in South Australia.

2008/2009 Committee Members

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Club Contact Details

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For further information, contact Dave Pagano by phone on: 02 4777 4558 or 0413 766 501 or by e-mail: davehotboats@hotmail.com

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South Australian/NT Chapter

For further information, contact Paul Siddall by phone on: 0419 826 377 or by e-mail at: siddall@smartchat.net.au

Victorian/Tasmanian Chapter

For further information, contact Greg Carr by phone on: 03 9370 2987 or 0408 937 029 or by e-mail: gca42796@bigpond.net.au

Membership Update:

Vic	33	WA	3
NSW	29	Tas	4
Qld	2	SA	6
ACT	2	NT	1
USA	1	Total	81



THE HOLLOW LOG

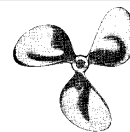
Volume 9, Issue 1

January 2009

The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association Inc.

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Narrandera 2008



Colin Bailey's 1964 Lewis, Hi-Fi

Narrandera 2008 proved to be a great weekend and with over 20 boats participating, it was definitely the best attended National Get Together so far.

People travelled from as far as South Australia, Northern NSW and, wait for it, Darwin, and we can even include one enthusiast from the USA. Thanks to you all for the effort.

Boats attending were:

<i>Al-Falfa</i>	Darren Crawford
<i>Aries</i>	Harry Stewart
<i>Atomic</i>	Dave Pagano
<i>Butter Box</i>	Alan Price
<i>Electric Girl</i>	Doug Bamberry
<i>Hi-Fi</i>	Colin Bailey
Lewis hull	Mick Salmon
<i>Miss Chif II</i>	Paul Adey
<i>Nova II</i>	Greg Carr
<i>Puff</i>	Dave Powley
<i>Ricshaw</i>	Rick Schoenauer

<i>Rebel</i>	Max Curtis
<i>Rebound</i>	Bob Carter
<i>Screamin' Eagle III</i>	Paul Siddall
<i>Steinway</i>	Darren Goldberg
<i>Suspect</i>	Peter Cole
<i>The JET</i>	Frank Wicks
<i>Trinity</i>	Col Wood
<i>Turbo Fire</i>	Brenda Carter
<i>Vamoose</i>	Bernie Sanson
<i>Viteau</i>	Chris Schaeffer
<i>Willywood</i>	Mark Stevens

As has happened in previous years, most people arrived on Friday and returned on Monday to get the full benefit of the weekend, with many boats having a run on Friday afternoon. New faces and boats this year were plentiful.

It was wonderful to catch up with old friends and to meet new members and once again, it was encouraging to see several members come along to enjoy the weekend, even though they didn't have a boat in tow.

. continued page 4

Never Give Up

Some time ago a friend told me about a wooden boat that he had seen not to far from my house. My ears pricked up as they do when you think that you may find a gem in a shed some where, as we all do. It was not to long before I was over at the chap's house knocking on the door to see if it was a woodie or as a lot of them are, glass.



As I was waiting for some one to come to the door I was having a look around and could see a boat in an old shed. By this time a young lad had come to the door and the question was asked if he had an old wooden boat and the answer was yes. I asked if I could have a look at it and he said no worries. He told me that the boat was bought new by his grandfather in 1960 and it was a 17 foot Binx. It had a 308 Holden in it but it originally had a Dodge Q, but they took that out years ago and put it in another shed. The boat was in very good condition and when it wasn't being used it was stored in a shed on the property. The boat had all the original stuff that you just don't seem to find any more and I think that it was the first Binx that I had see that was all there.



The next question was do you want to sell it and without thinking too long he said no. I told him that if he wanted to sell it let me know and asked if he didn't mind me stopping in now and then to see if he would change his mind. I must have stopped in about 20 times over a 10 year span and the answer was always the same. One day

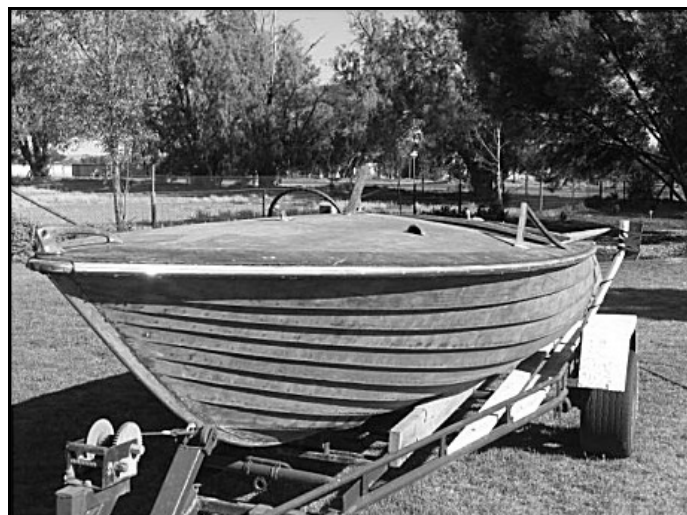
Paul Siddall

when I stopped in he had stripped the boat to a bare hull and he told me that he had to put a new plank in and thought that he might restore it while he was there. I thought to myself "I don't think that he will do it" and my chance of getting this is better than before.

For the next 12 months I drove past and could see that the boat was in the same condition and no work had been done. So one day I stopped in again to push my luck and he told me that he was sending it to some one to get it fixed so I thought that was that.



I'd forgotten about it for a few years when I got a phone call from a fellow member (Dave Drewer) to tell me that he had found an old Lewis in a factory getting some planks fixed. So, as you do, I shot over to see this Lewis and I couldn't believe my eyes, it was the Binx and it was in a bad way after being left in the weather for two years. The deck had lifted and it now needed 6 planks, I spoke to the chap at the factory and he told me that he had had someone that was going to do the planks but had left and he was going to send it back to the owner.



I let it go for awhile before I went to his place again and when I asked the question again it was still a straight "no!!!", but I don't give up easy!!!! I let it go for about 6 months before going back again and when I did I couldn't believe my eyes as I drove in the

came to Melbourne.

From all accounts we are the ninth owners of the boat.

Spirit II

When we bought the boat it plainly needed a lot of work. The boat had been actively used as a social ski boat up until a few years prior to our purchase. But years of storage in a tin shed out in Dubbo had effectively baked the hull dry. Deck joins had opened up and there was no question from my initial inspection that at an absolute minimum, a new deck would be fitted. Beyond that it was all a bit of a guess.

This Lewis had been built in 1964 with ply backed solid planks – the same as *Rebound*. Most of the solid planks had split down their length and ply pads had been fixed over the top to stop them leaking. The narrow cavitation plate had been replaced with wider timber plate, but this had large patches of rot in the timber.

Inside the hull, plenty of oil had soaked into the timber – bearers, ribs and planks all carried the dark heavy stain and distinctive odour of aging engine oil.



The transom and adjacent planks were in poor condition

Rather than be deterred by the obvious dilapidated state of the hull, I was buoyed by the original state of the boat. Virtually all the hardware was in place, mostly original. Most importantly though ... this was a genuine Lewis and a genuine Lewis is well worth restoring properly.

Game Plan

Initially we bought Turbo Fire with a view to storing the boat away as a project to be commenced when I retired (or slowed down) from my business. But with the boat sitting in the shed under a tarp, impatience took over and we decided to get cracking and have the boat ready for the Narrandera Nationals in October 2007.

Don McClymont of Advantage Marine who did some of the work on *Rebound* was commissioned to undertake the restoration.

Strip Down

The first task with any restoration is to strip the hull back to the last nut and bolt.... remove absolutely everything from the hull, assess carefully then plan the re-build.

With the bare hull on Don's shop floor, it was cleaned with a pressure cleaner inside and out to remove years of baked on crud & gunk. What emerged was de-lamination and rot that while unexpected, was not a shock.

Many of the planks, predominantly closer to the keel, had suffered badly. The ply backing had pulled away from the solid plank, with the ply coming away in fist sized chunks. The keel looked okay and the ribs similarly were good although not perfect.



The serious work begins

The transom was shot, rotted through and split horizontally. And finally the aft end of the planks were rotten, necessitating that about 75mm to 100mm was cut off at the aft end.

Cutting off the back of the boat should never be taken lightly and should be avoided if at all possible. From a construction aspect it makes sense to build a new transom around sound & solid timber planks, however there is a down side that creates difficulties.

In the case of Turbo Fire, the fuel tank was now considerably smaller than the original tank and the rudder is now closer to the prop. The prop is not as far under the hull as it used to be, or perhaps should be.

If this had not been a Lewis, the effort and cost of the re-build could not have been justified. But then if it had been anything other than a Lewis we would never have gone to look at the boat.

The second and final instalment of Turbo fire's restoration will follow in the next edition of "The Hollow Log".

Bob Can be contacted on 0418 101 626 or bobcarter@connexionpr.com.au

Quote for Today:

*"A man convinced against is will
Is of the same opinion still"*

Turbo Fire

This is the first of a two part series on the tracking down, purchase and restoration of a Lewis runabout by owner, Bob Carter. This article is a great reference for potential and current restorers.

The Purchase

The owner of *Spirit II* called in response to my ad on the CAWPBA web site. Peter Rich, the guy on the other end of the phone, accurately described his boat as a twin cockpit runabout, with wings and it had been built by Lewis – it had the badge after all. Peter lived in Dubbo so emailed photos to me. It certainly looked exactly like the kind of boat we were after. So my wife Brenda and I took a side trip to Dubbo, while en-route to Brisbane on business.



As found on the property at Dubbo, NSW

Peter had *Spirit II* stored in a farm tin shed on a property about 20 km out of Dubbo. I looked over and under and around this poor old girl and decided that it was something that we could restore to her former glory. We did a deal with Peter, then returned a fortnight later and towed her back home to Melbourne.

On the long drive back to Melbourne, Brenda declared that she would like this boat to be hers to enjoy. After all I had *Rebound*, the 1968 Lewis skiff, and it only seemed fair that she should have a Lewis that she could call her own.



The deal is done

Bob Carter

Heritage

While there was never any doubt that this was an original Lewis, Ron Hodge provided an invaluable tip – he thought the boat was built for (then) ski racer Phil Reeson. Phil went on to forge a notable career in offshore powerboat racing, with a string of race boats all called *Turbo Fire*.



Proud new owner

I tracked Phil down on the Gold Coast – and he confirmed that this was indeed his boat. We decided to restore the boat under its original name, *Turbo Fire*. The boat was built in 1964 and was powered with a 327 Chev running a six pack of Stromberg carbies. Phil ski raced the boat, including just one Bridge to Bridge race and then sold her to Michael McEnally who on sold the boat to a policeman in Sydney.

The boat then found its way to a fellow called Barber (family name) at Narromine in western NSW. He ran the boat with a 283 Chev and the 6 Stromberg carbies. The boat stayed in the district with the next owner being Mel Gidding who purchased the boat around 1969. The 283 engine was removed by Mel Gidding when the boat was on-sold to Rob Edmunstone in about 1975. Rob fitted the 318 Chrysler and re-named the boat *Spirit II*.



The strip down begins

Brothers Peter and David Rich bought the boat from Rob Edmunstone's widow in 1996, following the passing of Rob. The Rich brothers then sold the boat to us in September 2006 and so the Lewis

farm gate. There was a bloke with an excavator cleaning up the spot where the shed and boat stood last time I was there. I asked him what had happened to the shed and he told me that it had burned down with everything in it!! I can tell you my heart sank. I asked him if there was a boat in there and he told me that there was a boat in a old lean to in the distance. I shot over to find the boat there but nothing else. By this time the young lad had come out to let me know that all was left was the hull and a few parts and the rest had been destroyed in a fire and he asked me what the boat was worth now. I told him not too much and gave him a rough price and again I told him that I would buy what was left and restore it. He told me that he would think about it and let me know, so this time I left a phone number with him.



He rang me about three weeks later and said that he had talked to his family and agreed to sell the boat. I told him that I would come around and have a talk with him and have a good look at the boat, not that I hadn't looked a thousand times already.

The boat wasn't as bad as I thought, although it did need 6 planks and



a deck and there was no motor and half the fittings where not there. But hell, it is still an old woodie, so I paid the money and dragged the old girl home to a surprised other half and it didn't take long to convince her that I can fix it up again.

So I figure that you should never give up on something as you may get it in the end.

They're still out there

Every now and again someone tells me about a boat that is around the traps. I didn't expect one to surface less than one kilometre from my house at a friends place.

After checking the boat out and determining it was a Lewis, I decided that I didn't need another project and offered it to several people.

A couple of years went by and on a recent visit I noticed the boat was still there. By surprise Greg Carr rang me just as I walked into the horse stable where the boat was kept. When he asked what I was up to, I responded by saying "I'm looking at my new Lewis".

The next day I went back and picked it up. With a name like *FKN Mongrel* I knew this boat must have had a bit on notoriety.

A closer inspection revealed the boat was in quite restorable condition. A full resto for sure, but not a boat that had had the usual keep it going treatment.

It still baffles me why nobody bought it after all that time.

I knew I didn't need it and once home I gave it a good cleanup, getting rid of years of dirt. It looked even better with a coat of H2O Varnish.

At around the same time another mate came around, took one look at the boat and the name and decided he needed it.

In an off handed way I mentioned that I thought the boat would look

Dave Pagano

good with Lewis fins at the rear. Just something about the hull to me said fins.

After a call from Ron Hodge an appointment was made for him to look at the hull. After an inspection Ron confirmed it was a Lewis, built around the late 50's or real early 60's. What was really puzzling was his statement "This boat had fins. Lewis never built an open walkabout with fins". The more he looked at the boat the more he was convinced the hull shape could only be a finned boat. Poor Ron left my place scratching his head saying over and over "Lewis never made a finned open boat".

Recently a finned boat turned up on eBay (not sure of the builder) and guess what? Open walkabout with fins.

Maybe Lewis let one slip through.



Narrandera 2008 *continued*

Two project boats were brought along to show and to get some restoration advice on. Paul Adey's Gilflite skiff *Miss Chif II* was brought up from Melbourne and Mick Salmon's Lewis came across from the Wagga area.

Darren Crawford's skiff *Al-Falfa* looked very smart on the day after a refurbishment. You may remember that Darren had a slight altercation with a tree in the boat last year that caused some damage to the



Several of the boats at Narrandera

deck. Darren decide to give the boat a general freshen up while doing the repairs and had the boat looking very smart. It was a bit of a struggle for Darren to get the boat to Narrandera this year as time was against him. Jet (the Labrador) would have been very disappointed if *Al-Falfa* hadn't made it as he simply loves to ride in the boat and he actually gets the sulks when the ride is over.

A couple of demo runs by made everyone sit up and notice as its 350 Chev propelled the boat along at very rapidly followed by the tell-tail hydro rooster tail.

As stated, there were several new boats on the scene this year and they included *Aries*, *Hi-Fi*, *Ricshaw*, *Rebel*, *Suspect*, *Trinity*, *Turbo-Fire* and *Viteau*.



Aries

Aries, a late 50's bondwood runabout, sounded great with its 232 ci Ford side valve V8 making all the right noises, as did *Rebel* once a minor engine problem was sorted out.

Rebel runs a 239 ci Mercury side valve V8. Many will have followed the restoration of *Rebel* on the website and how it was converted back to a skiff. Unfortunately, owner and restorer Max Curtis didn't get to drive the boat over the weekend after cutting his hand quite severely while prepping the boat for Narrandera.



Ricshaw, Butterbox and Vamoosse

Hi-Fi, a twin cockpit Lewis runabout, originated from NSW before finding a new home in South Australia. The very original 1964 built hull runs a Chrysler 313 V8 and ran beautifully all weekend.

Another Lewis that made its debut at Narrandera was *Turbo-Fire*. This 1965 built twin cockpit winged runabout is fitted with a Chrysler 318 ci V8. This classic Lewis came from Dubbo and had just come out of a very faithful restoration and performed every bit as well as it looked.

Another boat just recently out of a restoration was *Viteau*, a 1965 16' Len Hedges hull. I only wish my furniture at home looked as good as the jarrah deck on this boat did. The presentation of *Viteau* was nothing short of striking. *Viteau's* 350 Chev provided the boat with quite lively performance.



Suspect

We already have a couple of Seacraft hulls in the club and now *Ricshaw* has added to the numbers. This immaculate runabout with its rearmount Ford 302 was a real performer. Owner Ric Shoenauer came all the way from Darwin to be at Narrandera for the weekend.

Hang on now - you can all settle down, Ric and crew flew down as the boat is stored in Victoria.

Also unseen by most of us was *Suspect*, a late 50's twin cockpit Eddy hull. I was keen to see this boat as the hull shape is very similar to my own Eddy, *Stormy*. After going for a ride in *Suspect*, the similarities in handling were obvious, although *Suspect's* 351 Ford certainly had a whole lot more urgency about it than *Stormy's* Y block has.



Viteau (foreground) and Al-Falfa

Trinity was a something a little different. *Trinity* is a 17' Lewis and Johnson hull and for the majority of people looking at the boat, it was just another timber boat. Not so. The Ford 351 powered rearmount actually has a glass hull and is believed to be the last timber decked glass hull built by Frank Lewis and (current member) Ron Johnson. The boat was very original and looked a treat, right down to its beige coloured hull (so, so 70's!). There has been a fair amount of discussion about whether we include these glass/timber combinations in the club and it is something that will be discussed further at the next committee meeting.



Rebel, Hi-Fi and Screamin' Eagle III

The weather over the weekend was excellent, as was the water level. There were more general public boats on the lake this year than we have seen, meaning we had to work in a bit with them. We have been spoilt in previous years with a lack of the public using the lake. A visit from the Waterways on Sunday morning caused a few unnecessary concerns. They had come to check things out after a complaint

from a member of the public from the day before. It seems that the locals didn't like sharing "their" lake with us. This adds more fuel to the argument for us to, within reason, make any venue we use exclusive for our use for the duration of the event.

A guest who came along for the weekend was Barbara Carper. Barbara, who reigns from Seattle and happened to be in Australia on a business trip from the US, has had a long association with classic boats, being the owner of *Miss Thriftway*, a Rolls Royce Merlin powered unlimited hydroplane built in 1959. *Miss Thriftway* has quite a pedigree and had a very successful racing career in the late 50's and early 60's.



This was an un-staged line-up representing all of the 2004 to 2008 commemorative T-shirts

On water activity was pretty constant all weekend with many people driving other member's boats. I know many fellow Victorians had a great weekend as water is scarce down south and it was the first opportunity for many of us to run our boats for some time. It was a good year for reliability as well this year, with no major mechanical faults or hull damage.



Turbo-Fire

The traditional Saturday night BBQ was well attended and for many, kept on until quite late. For some, maybe too late.

Narrandera 2008 can be put down as another very enjoyable weekend and I believe considered by everyone to be a success. There was some concern amongst a few of us in the lead up to Narrandera about enthusiasm waning, but I believe the support shown by members for this year's event has more than put that concern to bed.

Roll on Narrandera 2009.