

The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association

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Editor's Note:

As most of you are aware, I have spent the past eight months working in southern France. While it has been a great experience that ended all too soon, it is great to be back home and catching up with my 'normal' life.

After a bit of a rush with available material for this edition, it was still a struggle in the end. If you have anything of interest, please send it in for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please, keep talking to me

Greg Carr

Around the Traps

New South Wales:

The classic hydroplane *Crazy Baby* (formerly *Miss Boron*) is now with Dave Pagano. Dave intends to return the boat to its original configuration and livery.

Another skiff has surfaced in NSW. The 13' Holden grey powered *Chug-a-Lug*, although tired, the boat is mainly complete.

Victoria:

Darren Goldberg owns a boat! A lovely Simpkin rearmount fitted with an automatic gearbox. Yep, three forward gears and reverse must make it special. It also has a "Park" position on the gear selector that Darren says is very handy in stopping the boat drifting away.

The well known late 1960's racing skiff *Miss-Chif II* has surfaced in Melbourne. The boat is currently under restoration.

The Melbourne Boat Show again proved a success for us both in publicity for the Club and attracting new members.

South Australia:

News from South Australia is that Paul Siddall has started work on his Binks skiffabout, *Ramrod*. *Ramrod* was well known on the SA raceboat scene during the 1960's achieving speeds approaching 90 mph.

Also in SA, the restoration of *Dingaka* continues in the hands of David Dinning.

Thank-you

Many thanks to Keith Laws who put in numerous hours covering the administration of the Club while I was overseas.



Group of boats at Northern Tasmanian Power Boat Club meeting at Rosevears. *Little Bruce* in foreground, then *Sugar* with owner Jack Arnold, outstanding restricted hull last season, *Fidjet* held by owner Graeme Atkinson, outstanding 95ci unrestricted hull last season, and members of Horsehead Ski Club about to be towed by Rass Filgate in Jenny Lynn. *Mercury* in background, still taking part in races, held State Championship in 1938.

The photo and caption above appeared in Seacraft magazine, January 1958

Coming Events

August 2003

- Victorian Get Together, 31st August at Darren's Factory, 61 Brunnel Rd, Seaford, Vic. Chat, parts swap/sell. Contact Greg Carr on 03 9370 2987.

September 2003

- NSW Wet Together, 28th September on the Hawkesbury River at Windsor. Contact Dave Pagano (AH) on 02 4578 4444 for details.

Coming

- The "National" Australian Classic Wooden Powerboat Get Together, currently planning for late 2003. Possible venue is Wagga, NSW. Early stages yet, but keep this event in mind.

We are still having problems with finding a centrally located venue for this event that has water in it. At the moment, I understand Wagga has only about a metre of water, which is not enough. I have heard that even the water level in the Hume Weir is just covering the tree stumps. Stay posted!

❶ Please check for confirmation of dates and venues

Club Contact Details

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The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association

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Merchandise

Caps and polo shirts sporting the Association's logo are available again. Caps are available now and shirts on order. Enquiries/orders to Greg Carr via email.

Shirts are \$27.00 each and caps \$18.00 each.



THE HOLLOW LOG

Volume 3, Issue 3

June 2003

The Classic Australian Wooden Power Boat Association

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Busy Times



The Sydney Heritage Fleet's "Kookaburra"

After struggling for content in the last issue, producing June's issue has been a relative pleasure. It has been a busy period with a good number of opportunities for us to get ourselves and our boats together, both on and off the water and it is these events that provide good content for this publication.

The South Australian Wooden Boat Festival was held in March in Goolwa. Again a very successful show for our South Australian Chapter with excellent boat numbers turning up. The Goolwa organizers again looked after us by holding the popular "Roar Past" for our woodies. The weather caused a few problems with the water being a bit rough, but it was a successful event all the same.

The Victorian Chapter finally

managed to put some boats on the water with its first Wet Together in March in Nagambie. Although boat numbers were low, the day was enjoyed by all who attended. Victoria then followed up in April with another Wet Together at the National Water Sports Centre at Bangholme in Melbourne. There was an excellent turnout for this day but unfortunately the weather was absolutely lousy.

April also presented the NSW Chapter with an opportunity to get some boats together with the first Sydney Speedboat Festival, held at the National Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour. While woodie boat numbers were low, everyone agreed that this show has excellent potential and will develop.

Things will quieten down now

with winter well and truly here, but keep in mind the "National" Australian Classic Wooden Powerboat Get Together currently being organized for later this year. We are hoping for this one to be the BIG one. Stay tuned as details come to hand for this major event.

On behalf of all members, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who have put in so much effort and often personal expense to organize these events. While it can be very frustrating at the time, the big reward for these people is on the day when we have good numbers turn up and everyone has a great time. Thanks also to all those who support these events by attending. I haven't heard of anyone being disappointed on the day.

Rebound Mk 1?



Aqua-Holic today

It would appear that the first Edgar McDonald skiff named Rebound, not to be confused with the later skiff now owned by Bob Carter, has been found in South Australia. Renamed Aqua-Holic, the 16' Lewis is in desperate need of restoration.



Rebound in the 1960's

Victorian Wet Together, Nagambie

Keith Laws



Pleasant days in Nagambie

Well, its finally over - only three boats, but we really had a great day.

We were met at the ramp by Derek, Ross and Dean McLaughlan and the two boats that arrived were launched. *Yandy* went in first - hesitant to start but after a little coaxing it burst into life. Derek, in *Bonded Pleasure* (a lovely little Holden powered Hartley Cruiser) and *Yandy* then headed off.



Bonded Pleasure

It was then time for Dave Powley to launch *Puff* and similarly it took a little while for the Ford to burst into life, but when it did it sounded really good. Marilyn and I then left the ramp and Dave after we

who joined us for the day.

Yandy ran well for a short while, but it too succumbed to gremlins and was towed in by the tinny (how embarrassing - being towed by: 1. A Tinny and 2. Outboard powered) Not to worry Craig - the boat is superb and it should only be a little while before the gremlin is banished.

There was plenty of opportunity for all present to go for a ride in both *Yandy* and



Some of the gang

Bonded Pleasure prior to a BBQ lunch. Can that Derek cook a steak!!!!!!!!!!!!!! You have a job in future old mate - in fact - you may even give Peter Adcock (our immediate past cook) a run for his money.

After some socialising, drinking and eating we found that all too soon it was time to head off.

Thanks again to Wendy, Ross, Dean and Derek for making us so welcome in your little bit of paradise. It was great!

water. Derek helped Dave put the boat back on the trailer and after an inspection, a couple of splits were found in some planks.

It was also really great to catch up with Keith and Dorothy Simpkin

French Woodie

During my stay in France I had intended to have a good look at the classic boat scene in Europe, but unfortunately summer and its accompanying boat shows were just starting up as I prepared to head home. Winter in Europe, understandably, really shuts things down, particularly water based activities. The next time I head there I will have to make sure I go at the beginning of summer, not winter.

One boat I did see was on the lake at Anecy, a very picturesque town in the east of France. There was nobody around to talk to about the boat, but it was about the only



wooden power boat I had seen since leaving Australia.

The boat was of carvel construction and about 20 - 22' long with a beam of

about five feet. Power would only have been from a small rear-mounted four cylinder at a guess as the boat would be used for tours and sight-seeing only, having five rows of seats. There were actually three of them tied up there, all of the same design.

Quote for Today

"Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy"

Queen Of The Waves Visits New Zealand

Nostalgia

Mrs. Grace Walker and her record breaking hydroplane Diane travelled to New Zealand to contest the Griffith and Masport Cups. Although these trophies eluded her, she added further laurels to her already impressive record.

This is the first occasion for many years that Australia has had a challenger for the Griffith Cup, considered the premier Australasian speedboat trophy. The race was conducted by the Evans Bay Yacht and Motor Boat Club, over a course on the Petone foreshore. The course, which I have heard suggested, favoured the big boats, Redline and Susan Leigh, consisted of eight two mile laps.

The actual number of starters numbered only four and Redhead, driven by Len Southward, gained the maximum points to retain the trophy for the eleventh consecutive time.

The starters were Redhead and Susan Leigh, both huge hydros powered by aero engines of 1400 h.p., the tiny Diane with a D type Jaguar engine, and Slipray, another local boat, powered with a D type Jaguar, also.

In the first heat, Redhead, skillfully handled, went away to an easy win from Susan Leigh, driven by H. Rutledge, with Diane a good third. The weather for the race was very poor and racing conditions very rugged and not helpful for making new records.

When the time came for the second heat Diane had unfortunately to withdraw, due to a broken water scoop. The Susan Leigh had to withdraw, also, with a cracked and broken petrol tank. Slipray, the only other competitor, also withdrew at this stage, which left only Redhead for the second heat.

Len Southward took his boat around the course and completed the race at an easy pace.

Final placings were Redhead, 800 points, first; Susan Leigh, 300, second; and Diane, 250, third.

In the Masport Cup, the main interest centred on Redhead and Susan Leigh, for Diane could not be repaired in time for the event. Susan Leigh took a cheer when she took an early lead, but it was short lived, as Redhead soon shot to the front and showed her stern to the other competitors for the remainder of the

course. Final results were Redhead, Susan Leigh and Jason (J. Nicholson).

Special mention must be made of the fine skill displayed by Len Southward in getting Redhead to the line, as his Allison V12 engine was ruined a few days prior to the race, in a fire. In almost record time he installed and tuned a similar engine, which didn't miss a beat during the two races.

The bad luck which dogged Diane in Wellington, did not continue when she traveled to

Auckland. Racing at Flat Rock, on the Tamaki Estuary, Diane, driven by Mrs. Grace Walker, established two New Zealand records. Her speed of 90.2 m.p.h. bettered by 15 m.p.h. the previous records for the 266 c.i. and also the unlimited hydroplane class.

At the Auckland Provincial Speedboat Club regatta Diane scored a meritorious victory in the Northern Zone Unlimited Hydroplane Championship.

With the engine perfectly tuned by her husband, Norm Walker, Mrs. Walker shot Diane straight into the lead and after one lap of a mile, led the second boat, Top Flite, by a quarter of a mile. At the finish of the five-mile race Diane was a good half-mile in the lead and scored a very impressive win from Top Flite. The only other starter, Hopit, failed to complete the course.

A big disappointment in this race was the fact that Slipray, one of Auckland's fastest boats and powered by a similar engine to Diane, was unable to compete due to dirt in the fuel line.



Mrs. Grace Walker, crowned Queen of the Waves by New Zealanders, driving her hydroplane Diane at full speed.

Although the Griffith Cup remains in New Zealand, Mrs. Walker, Norm Walker and Diane acquitted themselves with distinction and undoubtedly have given quite a lift to the sport across the Tasman Sea.

This article was reproduced from Australian Power Boat and Yachting Monthly, June 1958

Current Club financial member numbers are

Membership Statistics

as follows:

VIC	40
NSW	26
QLD	10
TAS	3
SA	2
WA	1

To save you the maths, that's a grand total of 82 members!

The Sydney Speedboat Festival

Neil Blyth

This event was the first of its kind to be held at the National Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour in Sydney and it is planned to take place every second year to complement the Sydney Classic and Wooden Boat Festival, which also takes place biennially on the alternate years. It was a much smaller affair than the Wooden Boat Festival, with just under 30 boats in attendance. There was good variety however, with superb examples of Formula 1, Ski-race, Rivas and classic wooden hydros and ski-boats. Entrants chose to display their boats either on land or in the water, with the latter being able to take part in a 'cruise' around the Cockle Bay area (more on this later).

The rain stayed away for most of Saturday, although the second half of Sunday was basically a washout. Although this kept the numbers down a bit, it wasn't too much of a

Saturday at 12 o'clock was the time for the first cruise of the speedboats around Cockle Bay. I joined Andrew Petty in *Sheba II* as we led the small procession behind a Waterways Authority boat under Pyrmont bridge and into Cockle Bay. We continued cruising around at idle for the first circuit and then the guys in Waterways boat pulled off to the side and signaled to us to continue circling. Did somebody say circle work...? Andrew took that as an invitation of sorts, so we charged off across the bay, the beautiful sound of the Ford Y-block turning every-

Sheba II, Quick and a Riva on the water

body's head. Before long there were several speedboats charging around the bay, churning up the water and creating a great spectacle for the Saturday afternoon crowd. Another minute or two of fun and then we headed back out under the bridge and back to our moorings. Then we got in trouble. Apparently we were all supposed to continue circling at idle. Oops! That seemed a bit strange to us though as the crowd definitely loved seeing these boats going fast. Oh well, no harm done. Sunday's cruise was as expected - a lot more restrained and all were on their best behaviour, if not a tad bored.....

Another highlight of the weekend was a talk by Ken Warby on



Dad's Woody, Atomic and Mystic



Trophy winner, Predator

problem for keen boating types as there were a few different presentations given in the museum theatre. Of particular interest were Graham Lloyd's talk on Australian Speedboating and Dave Pagano's talk on historic boat racing. Graham has had a long involvement with power boats in this country and gave a presentation on some of the best speedboats in the country today. Graham has also published a full colour book featuring these boats titled 'Cool Boats'. I grabbed a copy of this book last month as I was most impressed with the photography (grab a copy if you get the chance). Although the book features mainly modern fiberglass powerboats, there are quite a few classic woodies and hydros featured. Well worth a look. Dave's presentation included some old video footage of classic hydros racing in America. The camera was mounted on the front of the boat looking back at the pilot and gave an awesome look at the water and noise that the pilots had to contend with during racing.

his world water speed record. Ken set the world water speed record with his boat 'Spirit of Australia' in 1978 with a speed of just over 317 miles per hour! This record still stands today, which is a remarkable and inspiring feat from a guy who built his boat in his back yard out of plywood. 'Spirit of Australia' was propelled by a single Westinghouse J34 Gas Turbine producing a maximum of 3,500 lbs. of thrust (around 6000 hp!). The boat is now permanently on display inside the museum along with footage of his record breaking runs. Ken is currently preparing a new boat powered by the same engine, but this time fitted with an afterburner, for around 9000 hp! Bloody Hell !!!

There was a trophy (donated by Dave Pagano) given for the best boat in show. This was picked up by Darrell Brown and Ray Jones for 'Predator'. It's damn hard to beat a Merlin powered hydro for sheer presence. By about 4 o'clock it was still raining consistently so we began to pack up the boats and head for home. Overall, as a first event, it was a success and I am sure that in the years to come the small organizational difficulties will be ironed out and the numbers of entrants and visitors will increase.

Victorian Wet Together, Bangholme

Greg Carr

Following up on the recent day at Nagambie, the Victorian Chapter got its act together in a serious way with its Wet Together at Bangholme in Melbourne and what a day it was. Melbourne has been flat out getting a good day's rain for about five years now and when do think it finally happened? Yeh, good guess!

Despite the very damp day, a good number of people turned up, along with ten boats. These included Dave Powley and *Puff*, Keith Laws and *Pearl Necklace*, Doug Bambrery and *Electric Girl*, Craig Balme and *Yandy V*,

well represented on the day.

The boats that made it on to the water were given a good workout.

Pearl Necklace was launched for the first time in many years to prove that it actually floats and goes. Apart from a couple of minor mechanical problems, it ran impressively.



The one and only area spot was very popular



Peter Adcock and Keith Simpkin

Todd Kelly and *Fleetwood*, Darren Goldberg and his Simpkin runabout, Bob Carter and *Rebound*, Mark Stevens and *Willywood*, Carl Langdon and *Big Daddy* and Ross Jones and *Sawn Off*. Of the 10, eight hit the water.

The day was used as an opportunity for CAWPB Honorary Memberships to be awarded to boat builders Keith Simpkin and Peter Adcock in recognition of their contribution to boat building and wooden speed-

Keith Simpkin driving and enjoying the boat so many years after he built the hull.

Bob Carter brought along his Lewis skiff *Rebound*. Although fuel pump problems kept the boat from running, everyone was appreciative of Bob bringing the boat along and were all suitably impressed with Bob's restoration work.

Todd Kelly's new Syndicate made an impact with its superb presentation and an impressive looking 500 odd horsepower Chev sitting in the back.

Mark Steven's *Willywood* made it as well. It is the first time most members had seen this immaculate Holden 202 ci powered Seacraft.

Electric Girl was quite impressive on the day, sporting its new 327 Chev motor. The boat has been running a 308 Holden, but during its racing days ran a 327 Corvette.

Yandy V made it after a last minute struggle finding a new starter motor. I'm sure it was worth the effort Craig.

We have also discovered that we have a group of very unoriginal comedians in the club who all made the same reference to a *Pearl Necklace* when a message was put on



Keith Simpkin and Darren Goldberg

the Bulletin Board that Jared Laws had found an item of jewellery that someone had lost. As this is a "G" rated newsletter, I won't elaborate (tsk, tsk gentlemen!).

Comments on the day suggested that the venue was extremely popular with very good



Fleetwood

facilities, excellent vantage points, etc.

Congratulations and many thanks must go to Keith Laws for organising a great day.



Wildwood

boats. Keith is now retired while Peter still builds Syndicate boats. Peter also received a Boat Building Award, recognizing his 40 years in the industry. Their handiwork was

Goolwa 2003

Dave Powley



Greg Carr's 2001 report on the Goolwa Wooden Boat Festival is a hard act to follow, but here goes.

the river into 2 foot waves, which are obviously not ideal conditions for small, fast boats.

Upon arriving at the venue I had the pleasure of meeting all the active S.A. Club Members of whom we read about in our newsletters. All the boats that were at the last meeting were again present. (see newsletter Vol 1 Issue 3 which contains extensive coverage as well as a plethora of photos)

Whilst there I overheard one of the partners of a local boat builder make reference to a boat called "Bluebird", which was apparently a tender boat for the water speed attempt by Donald Campbell's Bluebird. The comment was that this boat would be an ideal restoration project as she is in good, sound condition and obviously has a great history. Anyone looking for a boat to restore???

Boats in attendance included *Lincoln* – Paul Siddall, *Starfire* – Dennis Siddall, *Screamin' Eagle III* – Paul Siddall, *U-Boat* – John Bowden, *Wiski* – Rob Trembar, *Redskin* – Adrian Ousman, *Hoggy* – John Pellow, *Comanche* – Colin Bailey, *She's a Pearler* – Rob Wilkinson as well as *Cherry Babe* and an unnamed ply basket case. There was also a couple of other boats including *Dragon* which is the sister boat to

Lincoln and *Buccaneer*. *Buccaneer* is presently for sale at \$35,000.

At about 1.30pm about 8 boats lined up for the roar past with me being a passenger in *Starfire* and it certainly did turn into a ROAR PAST with the wash from the passing fleet, coupled with the 2 foot waves, causing the large cabin cruisers to bob around like corks in the ocean. Some of the cruiser owners had themselves and their female companions using everything includ-



Jason

ing their feet to keep the boats separated and from crashing together.

As I said earlier, I had the pleasure of riding in Dennis Siddall's boat *Starfire* during this "Roar Past" and she has a fairly high prow just like my boat *Puff*. We had a few seconds of concern when she buried her bow in a steep wash, which came over the gunwhales, however, with all that power on tap Dennis soon powered her over the top.

Naturally, no sooner had we completed the



Vampire

Roar Past and recovered the boats that the conditions improved quite considerably.

Sunday, the weather was an even greater improvement, sun shining, no clouds and the

observed on their Captain's faces. You could almost read their minds "here we go again" and they already had their crews on standby ready for action for the consequences of the passing parade of "petrol powered rev-heads".



Wiski

site and event that will be Goolwa 2005.

Thanks again to Paul Siddall for assisting in making this another successful weekend.

For those wanting to attend the event in future years it is an ideal family venue. Apart from the myriad of wooden boats there is a Saturday Night Fireworks Display, Fairy

Light Parade on the water, all with a carnival atmosphere and an abundant supply of food, music, and displays. There is also a steam train running on a picturesque track right on the waters edge at the Goolwa railway Station alongside the new wharf area.



Cherry Babe

wind had dropped. Again, this time at 12.30pm we lined up for the Roar Past. This time the pass was not so turbulent for the moored boats however concerned looks were



Unusual and unknown

It was a great pleasure to experience the sight and sound of a small fleet of woodies passing under the Hindmarsh Bridge, their V8 engines roaring.

I can highly recommend a visit to this unique

Pictures thanks to Dave Powley and Graham Jennings



It's a Pearla

The weather was almost a replica of the previous meeting with a cool Saturday, including passing rain squalls, backed up by a 20 knot southwesterly wind. This wind chopped



Everyone enjoys Goolwa



Getting ready for the "Roar Past"