

Moody Moments

Magazine of the Moody Owners Association Australia.

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Now here is a nice piccie to open 2010 – courtesy of David Pollitt and Kerryn Mansell. David and Kerryn sail a Moody 36 *Alcyon* out of Melbourne. As you can see it is a typical sunny day for Melbourne. The Moody 36 was built between July 1996 and October 2000 with some 118 being built. She was popular because she was fast, safe and comfortable with 7 berths in 4 cabins – very roomy for a centre cockpit.

What have we been up to?

Well, from what I hear quite a lot. Kerry Jenkins from *Blue Eyes* is working on a crane/davit system that can lift outboard motors and also hold small dinghies from the stern of your yacht. The system he showed me when I finally got to Sydney (alas by 'plane not *Lady L*) had an ingenious sleeving system that allowed lighter gauge tubing to be used, making it neater, easier to stow and far stronger than single bent tube. I believe davits are a most important piece of equipment on a yacht, particularly as we – like out boats – get older! They make life so simple by allowing the dinghy to be neatly and safely stowed. Last year, when we went north, we turned our 2.7 metre Gemini RIB vertical in the davits to protect it and us from waves and following seas when we crossed the Wide Bay Bar. I would still stow a dinghy on deck if the sea conditions were less than ordinary or if I ever get to do blue sea sailing.

Kerry intends manufacturing his system and I believe it would be a most useful piece of equipment since it can be removed and stowed but also can be swivelled around to lift loads and motors. If you are interested or better still can assist him in production or marketing, please get in touch with him.

David and Kerry raced *Alcyon* (photo front page) in the Victoria Week where some 19 classes of yacht were involved in sailing from Melbourne's Docklands and from Geelong – site of the host club the Royal Geelong Yacht Club. This series event is the one of the oldest yachting events in Australia, first established in 1844 and becoming the Royal Geelong Regatta in 1859. *Alcyon* raced in all events together with some 451 other yachts, coming 15 out of a fleet of 61 other starters in winds of up to 30 knots.

Just as exciting, Geoff and Michelle Fields sailed *Windward Spirit*, their Moody 425 across the Tasman to Tasmania and explored the east Coast. Geoff said they “ had a great crossing, Port Philip to Tamar River in 28 Hrs averaged 7 Kts and one tack all the way.

Never touched the helm just a few sail trims and George did the rest”.

Finally, I know Ken Furphy off *Gwenda* has been slipping and anti-fouling his Moody Eclipse 33 because I saw *Gwenda* on the slipway at our Club, the Wynnum Manly Yacht Club. We still haven't caught up on the water, but once the weather settles I expect we will. While I was in Sydney I helped an old friend of mine deliver his new-second-hand yacht from Port Hacking to Broken Bay. It was Boxing Day so we had to out of the way of the Sydney Hobart fliers screaming down to Tasmania. The boat – an American Catalina 38 – sailed well under genoa alone in 30 knots S/E. Nice boat, but not a Moody.

Technical Tips

You probably all know this, but there is an easy and safe way to clean the cooling tube of your heat exchanger on your motor. *Lady L* has a Diecon Kubota 50 hp diesel with a heat exchanger in which the cooling tube tends to accumulate a fair amount of coral/lime from the water up here. It is possible to damage the tube if you try cleaning the pipes using metallic rod, and using the kebab sticks I had used in the past takes a long time and still doesn't clean the pipes in the tube properly. It also makes your kebabs taste horrid.

Diecon quoted me \$25.00 to clean exchanger but instead I made up my own cleaning tank. It consists of a length of 90mm PVC down-pipe with one end closed off and glued with blue-glu PVC cement. On the other end, the plug is removable. I cut the tube to the length of my cooling tube – about 450 mm – and placed the tube in the tank. I then added vinegar (Acetic Acid) which I was told is used by commercial cleaners rather than hydrochloric acid which tends to be too strong, and waited. In half an hour, the tube was clean and shiny, with no marking of the copper at all, since copper does not dissolve in acetic acid. Total cost - \$8.00 for the pipe and fittings and \$1.25 from Aldi's for the vinegar. Works like a charm.

Finally, an article on whales Kerry Jenkins sent me some time ago. I have included it before, but since I didn't manage to photo any of the whales I saw last year when we went to the Whitsundays, (including the one that ran under our keel south of Scawfell island) I thought a repeat of the article worthwhile.



SPEEDHUMPS IN THE OCEAN A Tail of Whales

A brief history of Australia and whales.....

Each year beginning in May the whales from Antarctica migrate up the east coast of Australia to the warmer northern waters of Queensland generally heading to Hervey Bay and points further north around the Whitsunday Islands. The primary whales are Humpback Whales and Southern Right Whales and were hunted to the edge of extinction in Australia until all commercial whaling ceased in 1978 (Albany in south eastern Western Australia and in 1962 at Byron Bay in northern New South Wales). The major reason that Australia ceased whaling was not out of compassion for these mammals but simply that we ran out of whales and the preceding 20 years had been enough for us to forget our nefarious (from the whales perspective anyway) past activities and now....we really, really love whales. The whale population has expanded, particularly Humpbacks to over 10,000, the Southern Right is much slower to rebuild its numbers and are comparatively rare. The whales cavort in the warm northern waters, give birth and then much socialising takes place between Mr and Mrs Whales before heading back around October to the Antarctic waters for the southern summer. When they pass the coast of Sydney (where we are located) it is sort of a whale freeway, they are in transit and are just ploughing along at about 5 – 6 knots. When heading north they follow the east Australian current which is inshore and the reciprocal current (south) is well offshore so the whales are not so much in evidence when returning.

On a cool winters day in June, armed with two hot blondes and some cold beer we set off from Pittwater to do some whale watching. Previous years had shown me that the whales swim north to around Long Reef where they make a turn to starboard to avoid the Central Coast area. We sailed south with a westerly breeze of about 10 knots with calm seas to cross the “whale freeway”. National Parks and Wildlife have a whale exclusion zone of 200 meters and 5,000 rules and regulations regarding what can and cannot happen around whales. I, of course am a law abiding and upright and sober citizen..... so I follow the rules stringently and have my tape measure handy at all times to accurately check the distances. There is the possibility that when viewing the photos the reader may believe that the whales are closer than the minimum distance, but this is just a quirk of photography (actual objects are further away than they appear to be!!!!)

The crew – Therese & Carin



Captain Ahab (no Ishmael)



To return to the tail..... the wind began to swing to the SE necessitating tacking to progress to the south and we continued to search for “blows” or other signs of the whales. When off Long Reef the first whale breached and came fully out of water, hung there somehow and fell sideways back into the water with a huge splash and thump. The time honoured cry went out... “Whale Ho”. We had met our first pod of migrating whales! There were about 5 in the pod and they proceeded to give the occasional breach display but generally kept swimming north with just their humpback fins showing and their tails showing for a deeper dive. These huge animals were all around us, “blows” were everywhere and some whales fell in line astern of us. We had turned our bows north and were on a steady and slow reach through a small swell with several more pods coming into view. It was hard at times to know where to

look as the activity was happening on all sides. One whale surfaced immediately alongside and underneath this whale was another whale which was belly up preparing to breach, slightly disconcerting as they do not have any particular method of falling back in the water other than random gravitational forces.

A camera shy one.....



The size of the fully grown whales is astonishing. They are 15 metres long and weigh in at 45 tonnes, barnacles all over their heads give them quite a different look indeed. The flippers are enormously long and powerful and when you consider the logistics of lifting a 45 tonne whale some metres in the air the appreciation of the strength generated to attain this is amazing. I regularly contemplate how deep they must go and then up to warp speed 10 towards the surface just to splash around. Not being a whale psychologist, I have no idea of why they expend so much energy in jumping around for little benefit other than our entertainment.

The two other crew of the day, Therese (significant other, first mate, galley maid etc) and Carin (a visiting Swedish Doctor and colleague of Therese) were experiencing their first close encounters of the blubberyt ype. I had crossed paths with whales many times but this was the first time I had actually gone out actively looking for the animals for the purpose of peering. The day was nothing less than fantastic. We had encounters with around 30 whales over a period of 5 hours and most of the time there were “blows” and breaching in the distance. Even at the end of the day when we had to return to Broken Bay, we were treated to another pod of whales “blowing” and continuing their trip north close inshore.

The following month Therese (sans poor moi) had a holiday on Fraser Island, a large sand island which provides the eastern protection for Hervey Bay from the Coral Sea and as such had the opportunity to again view the whales at their destination and observe their behaviour, very different again from the steady northward progress of the Sydney coast. These whales were playing and spy-hopping (where they just poke their heads out of the water to go people watching) and continue with their breaching and flipper waving. In Hervey Bay the whales swim up to the boats and proceed to inspect the occupants, a new meaning for whale watching.

Forward now to October, we managed a small break and went south to the “Great Southern Blues and Rockabilly Festival” at Narooma – down the south coast of NSW. Having a glass of bubbles with fresh prawns and oysters at a beach overlooking Montague Island, what do

we see but whale blows as they head south for the Antarctic summer! Sort of wrapped it up – we saw them coming then at their recreation camp, then going home!

Following the Blues Festival we returned to Sydney and fled to Broken Bay on 'Blue' for a few days, had a great time and reluctantly had to return to civilisation. Motoring back up towards Pittwater, well inside closed waters, what's this???. Whale blows!!! A pod of four whales were slowly making their way back out to sea, 2 big ones, one middle sized one and one little one (seems like a fairy tale). These whales were unfortunately in the motorboat highway and you could only watch as massive cruisers doing 30 knots flew across the water. The occupants of these boats (I use the word lightly) were totally unaware of the presence of the pod and probably still are. A Hanse was sailing into Broken Bay and mayhem broke out on the yacht when the pod surfaced in front of them and the helmsman immediately luffed up whilst they passed them and the crew were treated to the tremendous sight of these mammals swimming around them. It appears that they will seek quiet waters when the calves are tired and the mother whale will stick her flipper out horizontally and support the calf as it recovers. For the entire migration, the whales do not eat until they return to Antarctic waters, a long time and a longer distance between meals.

That wrapped up our year of whales as I would never have envisaged, whales were incredibly rare in the past and now it is great to see them as part of our sailing experience, now if we can only persuade the Japanese.....

Kerry & Therese