

Bilgewater

August 2022



*“Hey Skipper, When’s it Going to be Summer Again?”
(Stu Giles’ First Mate on Jeanneau 42, ‘Brittany’)*





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 Waikato Yacht Squadron

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*Our first and foremost objective is to encourage and support
safe family sailing – both cruising and racing*

COMMODORE'S COMMENT

The new season is rapidly approaching and I would like to use this space to introduce the sailing programme for the upcoming season and to highlight a few new initiatives that we plan to try this year and to explain what we are hoping to achieve with these new initiatives.

We are a sailing club and the goal of our club is to have our members sailing with the club. One of the ways we try to achieve this goal is to run regular sailing events. These events generally consist of a race followed by a beach gathering and barbeque.

Now I hear what some of you are saying "But I'm not a racer". For many people their only experience with sailboat racing is what they have seen on TV, be that the Olympics or Americas Cup, or they may have been involved in some dinghy racing. In these events boats are battling for position on the line with a lot of yelling and the occasional collision. These races are high pressure environments where mistakes are made. For some skippers and crews, that can be off putting. This is not what happens at a Waikato Yacht Squadron race.

We have a core of members who do enjoy the racing, but in my entire time with this club I have never felt under massive pressure. These crews will be on the line at the start and there will be the occasional yell of "Starboard!". But everyone treats these events in the spirit of a WYS event where the main goal is to have an enjoyable sail with a great group of people.

Sailing in a race isn't all about winning. If you are unsure about racing, hold back a bit at the start and watch what the others are doing. Then follow the course. Watch what the other boats are doing. How do they trim their sails, where are the crew sitting, what course do they take? Following a course is the best way to learn your boat. Most of our courses are set to give a wide range of points of sail.

I have heard people say that our events are more of an excuse to all head in the same direction at the same time and end up in the same place for a drink.

This year we have added two new events to the calendar. These "Have a go, fun races" are scheduled for the Sunday after a club race and are designed to give newer crews a taste for yacht racing. Both of these events are scheduled for long weekends. The intention is for newer/inexperienced crews to be assigned a more experienced member before competing in a short race. The more experienced sailor will help you understand the start procedure, they will help develop your understanding of sail trim, points of sail, and what all those ropes do. The races will be short and there will be prizes. The plan is to organise the race on Saturday night. Anyone who is interested can put themselves forward and crews will be assigned based on using the boats of the least experienced crews. The race will take place on Sunday morning with a course set to take about an hour.

For the most part we are planning to run the same events as we did last year. There is some concern around availability of the ramp (it is still being fixed), but we will cross that bridge when we come to it.

Below is the schedule for this season. It should be noted that I have also included a couple of major events at BOPTYS. The members of BOPTYS have always been great supporters of our Gulf Classic and I feel it is important that we return the favour and support their major events.

WYS SAILING PROGRAMME FOR 2022/2023	
Date	Event
22 October 2022 - Labour Weekend Saturday	Kawau Island Regatta for Keelers
22 October 2022 - Labour Weekend Saturday	Rocky Bay Regatta for Trailer Yachts
23 October 2022 - Labour Weekend Sunday	HAVE A GO FUN RACE
5 November 2022 - Saturday	Round the Buoys - Round 1
12 November 2022 - 19 November	Great Barrier Cruise Week
19 November 2022 - Saturday	BOPTYS Alan Civil Memorial Regatta, Rotoiti
26 November 2022 - Saturday	Tarahiki Regatta
10 December 2022 - Saturday	Ponui Regatta
31 December 2022 - Saturday	New Years Eve Beach Gathering
4 February 2023 - Saturday, Waitangi weekend	Motuihe Regatta
5 February 2023 - Sunday	HAVE A GO FUN RACE
18 February 2023 - Saturday	Hooks Bay Regatta
11 - 12 March 2023	Gulf Classic Open Endurance Race
25 March 2023 - Saturday	BOPTYS Regatta, Rotoiti
7 April 2023 - Good Friday	Coromandel Regatta
8 April 2023 - Easter Saturday	Fishing Competition, Coromandel
9 April 2023 – Easter Sunday onwards	Mercury Bay Cruise begins from Coromandel
28 April 2023 - Friday	Night Race
29 April 2023 - Saturday	Round the Buoys - Round 2

As you can see there are plenty of events. It is the expectation that all members make an effort to participate in some events.

Only two months to go now!

James

TAKING THE BOAT HOME FOR WINTER

Murray Pearce took this photo last month of our Kawakawa Bay Compound landlords, the Couldreys, taking their boat home for winter. The Compound land which we lease is part of the Couldrey's farm. Having hauled their keeler out at the Kawakawa Bay ramp by the wharf, they are seen here towing it home past the Compound.



And we think launching and retrieving our trailer yachts can sometimes be a tricky operation!

UPCOMING EVENTS

August Nog 'n Natter

Tuesday 23 August 2022 at Hamilton Yacht Club 7:30pm

Speaker to be confirmed.

September Nog 'n Natter

Tuesday 27 September 2022 at Hamilton Yacht Club 7:30pm

Compound key exchange and distribution of the season's sailing Handbook.

LOOKING AFTER OUR SAILS

Winter is a good time to take our sails home to rinse them in freshwater to get rid of the salt, but is this really necessary? And for that matter, what other things should we be doing to look after our sails. After all, sails are the main powerhouse of our sailing vessels. If we are far from home, we don't want to have our main source of power fall apart when we most need it. It also goes without saying that sails are expensive.

With these thoughts in mind, I have been researching sail care recently and discovered there are a number of actions we can take to get the most life from our sails. I have not listed the sources of this information as they are many and varied, however I give credit to them as they are way more knowledgeable on this topic than I am. The actions we can take are described below.

Firstly, Yes We Really Should Rinse Our Sails in Fresh Water to Get Rid of Salt

It seems the main issue here is when saltwater gets inside stitched seams, batten pockets and the like and then dries. When the saltwater dries, it forms salt crystals which remain and can then be abrasive, particularly to the stitching. The rubbing of the salt crystals against the stitching as the sail continually moves can lead to the thread weakening and eventually breaking down.

Therefore, if you drop a spinnaker in the sea, it is a good idea to take it home and give it a rinse before your next sail. Our headsails, particularly along the foot, also frequently get a good dosing of saltwater. While the top of your mainsail may escape the worst of the salt, a seasonal wash or hose down of the entire sail is still recommended.

Don't Let Your Sails Flap Any More Than Necessary

Yes, I know our sails flap every time we tack, each time we hoist them, and to an extent when we gybe. If you are a keen racer your sails are also likely to flap while you try to kill time on a start line. Sails will also flap when we reef them in blustery conditions. However, as far as possible we shouldn't let our sails flap or flog for any longer than is necessary.

The flogging of a sail puts the cloth under stress and weakens it. Eventually, over time the stressing will cause the fibres of woven sail cloth to break down. Common locations for failure from flogging are just inside the leech tape and in the stitching around battens (perhaps also due to the salt abrasion mentioned above).

The photo below shows my mainsail after I was caught in a squall while sailing off Whangarei. The wind was so strong that all I could initially do to prevent a knockdown was to dump wind from the mainsail. That meant it was flapping wildly for a few minutes culminating in that horrible sound of a sail tearing itself apart. Yes, I know I should have reefed or taken other action earlier, but at the time the squall seemed to come from nowhere.

In this case, tearing of the sail occurred both along the batten and up the leech.



The Result of a Sail Flogging. In Hindsight I Should Have Reefed Early On

In the case of a laminated or membrane sail, flogging results in a weakening of the sail that can eventually lead to delamination. Back in May I was crewing on a Young 11 keeler in a race in Auckland. It wasn't the greatest day for our sails. After our asymmetrical spinnaker wrapped itself like a python around the forestay during a gybe, the only way we could free it was to quickly gybe back onto the original tack. The spinnaker survived the second gybe and we then managed to untangle it, but on the third gybe to get back on course, rather hastily undertaken in race mode I might add, the top of our mainsail delaminated. That was our race over.



Not the Best Outcome – The Young 11 Laminated Sail After the Third Successive Gybe

And if that hasn't convinced you that letting your sails flog can not only be damaging but expensive, check out the photo below.



It Can Be Expensive To Let Your Sails Flog

Ultimately, the less a sail is allowed to flap, the less stress and damage it will experience. We can often reduce time flapping through good preparation in advance, for example by having reefing marks, pre-loading headsail winches before a tack, and efficient sail hoisting.

Whenever Possible, Protect Sails from the Sun (UV, Ultra-violet Light, Can Be Very Damaging to Sails)

The experts all seem to agree that if there is one thing that kills sails, it is ultra-violet light. Of course that is a bit of a problem as our best sailing days are often the sunny ones. However, the point here is that we should do what we can to protect our sails from sunlight. Some of that is easy, for example making sure we have our mainsail cover on when we are at anchor. Likewise, while at anchor either stowing our headsail down below or putting it under a cover. And if you have a furling headsail, making sure the UV protection strip covers the sail completely when it is furled.

The problem with sunlight is that the ultra-violet rays weaken both the sail cloth and also the stitching. The extent of degradation depends on the sail material. Nylon is very susceptible, so if you are drying a spinnaker on the deck in the sun (or when cloudy for that matter), it is prudent to put it away as soon as it has dried. Better still, dry it in the shade if you can.

Most woven sails are made of dacron (or depending on the country of origin perhaps called terylene) which is essentially a polyester material that has better UV resistance than nylon. Kevlar is apparently quite susceptible to UV, while the UV performance of other modern race sail materials is beyond this brief discussion. Suffice to say, whatever the sail material, the sun can be considered a major enemy of our sails.

Protect Against Chafe

Chafe is another significant enemy of sails. Our sailing vessels have all sorts of places where our sails can come into contact with hard objects – the rig, the spreaders, and the pulpit to name a few. An obvious example is a large genoa dragging across the rig during a tack. Often the best we can do is to ‘soften’ the likely culprits by covering them. For example we can cover with tape the shackles and hard edges where the lifelines join the pulpit, upon which a headsail will often rub. We can cover the ends of our spreaders with leather or plastic covers, and so on. In some cases it may be feasible to add a chafe protection patch to a sail where it would frequently rub.



Spreader End Cover

A lesson I have learnt is that ‘new noises’ can be a warning of areas of chafe that need to be investigated. One of the first times I reefed our trailer yacht was when undertaking a coastal passage of around 45 miles, that took 9 hours. There was this annoying noise I heard every so often, but as I was hand steering singlehanded without an autopilot, I struggled to locate the

source. It seemed to be coming from somewhere in the vicinity of the boom, but I just couldn't figure it out.

It was only after I lowered the mainsail having reached my destination that I found the source. Being a reefing novice, I had thought that with slab reefing I had to tie down each reefing point along the boom and I tied them all tightly. So tightly in fact that each time the noise occurred it was due to a part of the sail rubbing against a hole that had been drilled in the boom. Over the course of the 9 hour passage it had made a nice round hole in my sail.

Keep the Crew (and the Dog) off the Sails

While it might be tempting to crawl or walk across sails stashed down below, or for crew to have a snooze at anchor while resting on a headsail that has been lowered onto the foredeck, this is only bad for sails. Similarly, stowing sails poorly in the boat, or in a vehicle, with sharp creases being formed just won't make them very happy.

The Curse of Mildew

I have a particular dislike for mildew! All the more so having recently returned to a property in Australia after nearly three years away due to Covid restrictions, only to find all our curtains affected by mildew. Fortunately, we managed to save some of them by soaking them in 'Vanish' followed by a whole lot of scrubbing – a nasty, time-consuming job. Some of the curtain colour vanished along with the mildew, but we considered it a success. But what about mildew on sails? I don't suggest you use Vanish.

Needless to say, wet sails and a warm environment are tantamount to putting out a welcome sign for mildew. While it seems mildew may not affect the strength of a sail, it certainly produces unsightly stains.

The experts all seem to agree that with regard to sails, prevention is definitely better than any cure. And all that is required for prevention is to ensure your sails are dry when they are stowed. However, this might be easier said than done in wet weather. If you cannot take a wet sail home to dry, or leave it loose inside the boat to dry, your only other option, say for furled sails, is to return on a dry day not long afterwards to unfurl it and dry it out.

If your sail does become affected, it is first worth seeing whether it can be improved by scrubbing with a soft brush and clean water. It may be necessary to revert to a proprietary cleaner but you will need to ensure it is suitable for the particular sail cloth, as some cleaners can produce further negative outcomes, such as browning on subsequent exposure to sunlight.

What About Rodents?

This particularly applies when you store your sails off the boat, say for winter. After all, you really shouldn't have any rodents on your boat!

The problem is that rats and mice love to run through tunnels (like rolled up sails) and they like to munch on nylon and polyester. Apparently this is more about getting nesting material rather than feasting on your sails, but the outcome for your sail is the same.

Unfortunately, this is another matter for which I can claim firsthand experience. When we purchased our current Noelex 25, the owner advised that the sale included a great nylon reaching genoa that he poled out in light wind when cruising. He found it was often better than a spinnaker, especially when sailing singlehanded. Great I thought, though we would have to collect it later as it was some distance away safely stored in a shed on his property.

I duly collected the sail at a later date and when I opened the bag I discovered that rats or mice had beaten me to it. I took it to a sailmaker who uttered those dreaded words – “sorry, it’s simply not worth repairing”.



Yes, It Was a Great Reaching Genoa Before the Rodents had a Party

A Stitch in Time

The old saying that “a stitch in time saves nine” is certainly relevant for our sails. It pays to catch small tears and holes early or they will certainly get worse, and more expensive to repair.

Therefore, whenever we handle our sails we should be keeping an eye out for early signs of damage that would benefit from repair. Small holes and tears can be dealt with during the season, even if just through the application of sail repair tape (available in various sized rolls and materials from our main sponsor Burnsco).

A thorough inspection of our sails at the end of each season and undertaking any repairs is recommended. At the end of this season I found several areas of damage in one of my Noelex 25 headsails that I had not been aware of (admittedly it was a fairly old sail). The photo below not only shows a tear starting at one of the headsail battens, but also stitching starting to come away. A stitch in time



A Stitch In Time Or It Will Soon be a Whole Lot Worse

Of course there is no need to undertake any of the measures described above under two scenarios.

The first scenario is if your boat and its sails are never used and just sit like a trophy on a shelf. But hey, sailing is all about the experience of sailing, not about having an unused trophy boat. A boat and its equipment that exhibit a few inevitable scars indicate a nautical life that is well-lived.

The other scenario is if you are rolling in money and you are happy to just go ahead and spend it. You can simply buy a new sail when you need to, which depending on the size of your boat might just be \$3,000, or \$13,000 or \$30,000!

However, if you follow the above measures to care for your sails, they can certainly last a long time.

Bilgewater Ed.

LIFE AFLOAT – July/August 2022

Here's Nola Herrmann's next instalment of Life Afloat – living aboard keeler 'Masterplan', currently based at Opuā.



Myth Buster

Some of our non-sailing friends worried that we'd "be lonely out there" but of course the community of 'boaties' is large and ubiquitous – we have met some great people in Opuā!

There's a First Time for Everything

A toilet bowl that glows with phosphorescence at night!

Where's that Water Coming From?

Condensation is the chief culprit at the moment ... and it collects in the strangest places.

Broken, Lost and Worn Out

Dean's jandals – blown off the pontoon finger.

Sadly, many items stolen from our storage shed at home ☹️

'First World' Problems

I do miss the luxury of a heated towel rail and the dry towel it provides! We do have a hot shower on board (over the forward head) but didn't use it much in summer and autumn, preferring a cold freshwater rinse on deck after a swim. Since early May we have had the excellent facilities ashore in Opuā's Bay of Islands Marina. We choose to walk up there (about 300m) and enjoy 5mins of hot water for \$2 but still have to face the towel that's been 'drying' in the cockpit!

Fair Exchange

After twenty years in the Waikato we grew accustomed to the rumble of milk tankers going past our place and the occasional bellowing from the dairy herd across the road. Here in Opuā, those sounds would be out of place but instead we have the company of several flocks of sea birds gathered on the quarantine dock. Some nights the exchange of banter between the species groups would put football fans to shame!

Your Question's Answered

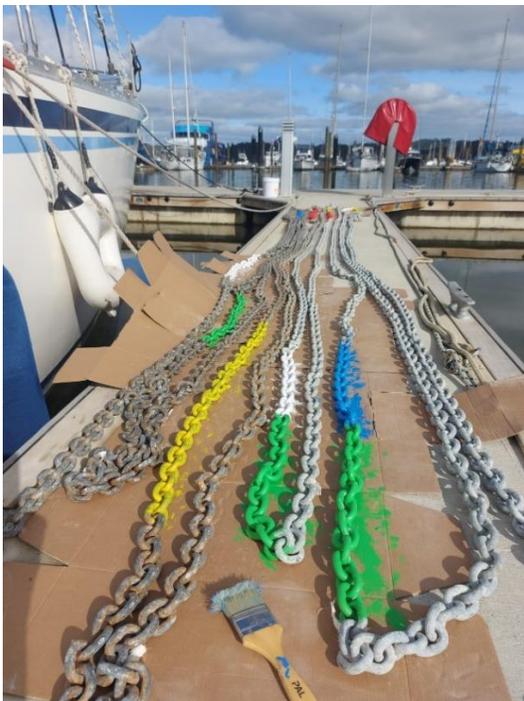
Question: *Given your current and future live aboard cruising plans, what were the design features that made a Moody 419 your choice of boat (in addition to Dean being able to stand up!). What essential features were you looking for?*

Dean's list: Mono-hull. 37-42'. Sloop. Centre cockpit. Fibre-glass construction. Interior layout suitable for offshore passages. No teak decks. Not a narrow fin keel. Not a spade rudder (ours is on a half skeg although Dean would have preferred an encapsulated keel with full skeg). Shaft drive. Not a project boat. Preferably slab reefing (we compromised on this and have a mast-furled main sail).

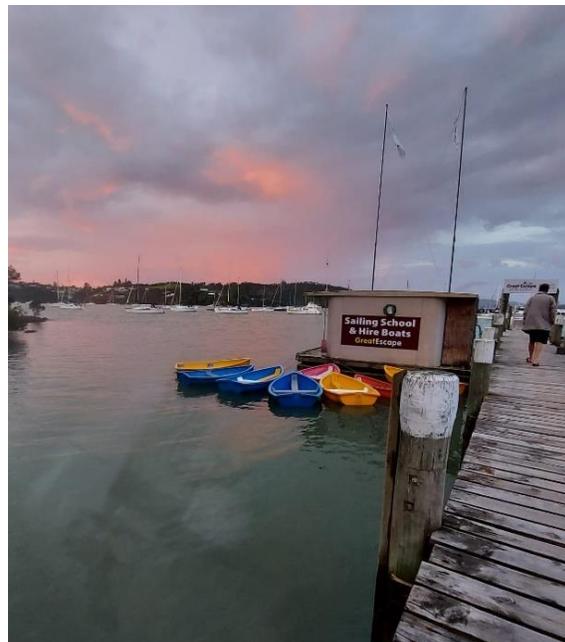
My list: A fridge and separate freezer. Two heads. Ideally, a U-shaped galley with a double sink. (This Moody 419 ticked all those boxes.)

Quotable Quote

"The bird rises against a strong head wind, not only in spite of the wind but because of it. The opposing force becomes a lifting force if faced at the right angle." L.B. Cowman



Colourful depth markers on Masterplan's anchor chain being freshened up with new paint. See if you can crack the colour code



The jetty at Opuia used by Great Escape Sailing School and Yacht Charters brings back good memories for us as we chartered first their Noalex 25 and then a Raven 31 before we bought Jury's Rig. It was on the strength of those experiences that we 'took the plunge' and bought our own boat

Farewell until next time, Nola Herrmann ☺

WINTER WORK ON YOUNG 77 'SIGNS OF LIFE'

Contributed by Alan Macdonald

'Signs of Life' took a little longer than usual to get back on the water this past season. A simple repair with a lot of knock-on effects.



'Signs of Life' Looking Good

When 'Signs of Life' was built, the hull was made beautifully - a compound curve sandwich made from strips of cedar and fibreglass. The cabin top is built using the same method. The decks and cabin sides are ply. I believe the deck was not glassed over at time of building but was glassed over when she was repainted some years later. Unfortunately the fibreglass stopped at the toe rail, leaving the ply edge protected by just the paint.

When I purchased 'Signs of Life', the survey showed up a couple of soft patches in the side deck on the port side. I repaired this in 2018, we were very late getting back into the compound that season too. After seeing the port side, I knew I was going to have to do the starboard side.

The job is simple, cut out a section of ply and replace it. Say it quickly, it sounds easy and would be if it didn't interlock with a couple of other parts.

To get at the side deck, first a couple of things needed to be removed, the pulpit, pushpit, stanchions and lifelines. The chain plates for the shrouds. Water fill inlets, the track for the genoa.

Anyone reading this who has installed something on their boat, especially at the pointy ends, you know how long this can take. I truly appreciate how roomy the quarter berths are after doing this!

Once all the fittings were out of the way, it was demolition time. The toe rail and rubbing strake had to be removed. This is quite heart breaking as they were glued and screwed and still in good condition. The plugs were drilled out, screws removed and the wood was pulled off, unfortunately the glue was tougher than the wood and by the time they were removed they were nothing but splinters. Of course it didn't stop there, the section of side deck I had to replace was right over the electrics. The radios were easy to remove, but I'll never get all the dust out of the wires to the switch panel!



Yikes!!

Now I could start the job ... A combination of sanding and scraping uncovered the damage. Thankfully not as bad as the port side, I ended up cutting out about 1.5m of side deck, the port side had required 3.5m to be replaced.

Cutting out the side deck was mostly done with an oscillating multi tool. The blade cutting parallel to the side deck and cutting under the cabin side from outside the boat and from the inside to separate the deck from the hull. Slow going, but the thin blade did minimal damage to the surrounding structure.



Note: Photos of the side deck are from the port side done in 2018, the starboard side was similar but not as well documented.

A piece of ply that was glassed on both sides was cut to size, thickened epoxy glue was applied and the ply was slipped into the gap extending past the hull and side deck. After the glue cured, I trimmed the deck to size and the full length was rounded over (not so gently done with the angle grinder and sanding disk) this was glassed the full length of the boat. The join on the cabin side had to have a fillet of goo applied and fibreglass applied, of course the windows were in the way so out they came...

More goo and fibreglass was applied inside the boat, because sanding dust inside is much more fun!

Once the structure was sound, it was time to make it pretty again, more thickened epoxy was used as filler and successive rounds of filling and sanding were repeated until I was happy enough with the finish.

Masking and painting followed, 2 coats of undercoat and 3 of top coat. Luckily the current colour scheme has a pinstripe at the boot top, so I had a clear line to stop painting. Once the white was on, I realised my filling and sanding wasn't as good as I had thought ... but once again luck was on my side and the worst was about to be hidden by grip paint or the toe rail and rubbing strake.



Progress! These Photos Again of the Port Side



Once the top coat had cured, more masking and grip paint went on. In 2018 I used Kiwi grip, easy to apply and it has lasted well but I found it wasn't as grippy as the existing surface. This time I tried something different. I painted the area with a coat of top coat, sprinkled sand on it, waited for it to start curing, brushed off the excess and rolled on another coat of top coat. It looks and grips like the original. Too early to tell if it will last.

Next up was the window, just about an article in itself. If you want to know more, I'll be redoing the port side later this winter...

When I was first planning this job, I had a chance encounter with a builder mate who gave me a couple of 6"x 2" planks. I still don't know the species but possibly Matai. I ripped these down for the rubbing strake and toe rails. I made enough for both sides so after 4 years they match again. These are glued and screwed on, the screws are hidden with plugs cut from offcuts (plug cutters are magic!).

All the deck fittings had to go back on, not much to write about but lots of MS sealant and then lots of solvent to clean up the mess.

Interior bits had to go back in, if I wasn't familiar with the wiring I am now. The interior still needs a coat of paint, and the lining fluff is missing in places, but at least I know the hull is sound.

Now of course life would be far too simple if I only tackled one serious boat job at a time, so half way through this process I had the trailer regalvanised. Lifting 'Signs of Life' off the trailer wasn't too difficult.



Hugh Beecroft Helping Alan With the Lift Operation

First, I dropped the front of the trailer as low as it would go, then I built a trestle under the boat just behind the trailer and then raised the front of the trailer back up. The boat was now supported by the trestle at the rear, and the trailer at the front. Next, I built a gantry to lift the front, it was made from 4 fence posts and a scaffold plank, with fence rails for bracing. With assistance from Hugh and a couple of borrowed chain blocks we lifted the front, about 50mm, just enough to roll the trailer out. Another trestle was built under the front of the boat, made from fence posts and packing timbers.



I took the trailer to work and spent a Saturday stripping it, a couple of little welding jobs were done and then I dropped it off to Perry's to regalvanise it. A couple of weeks later it was ready. A couple of hours after work had the axles cleaned up and painted with cold galv. The trailer was re assembled (at work again as having access to a forklift makes life easy).

Getting the boat back on the trailer was a reversal of the removal process and went very smoothly. I didn't even need Hugh for moral support for that lift.

Alan Macdonald

PROGRESS ON GREG AND JULIE REEVE'S NOELEX 22 PROJECT BOAT

Having completed reasonably extensive work on upgrading the trailer and its components, Greg says that their Noelex 22 'Pangur Ban' is just about ready to launch.



NEW YNZ PUBLICATION – Trailer Yacht Cruising Tips

Last month Yachting NZ released a new booklet called "Trailer Yacht Cruising Tips".

The author Wayne Holdt says *"After many years of racing and some cruising on trailer yachts we decided to get back into cruising and it's been great. There are always other cruisers to meet and the main reason for putting this booklet together was the growing number of people new to sailing purchasing boats which is great. This information is aimed at new trailer yacht owners but may also be helpful to all trailer yacht cruisers."*

An electronic copy of the document can be downloaded from the YNZ website.

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