

Bilgewater

July 2022



Winter Week in the Whitsunday Islands – see page 7





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

COMMODORE'S COMMENT

For this month's Commodore's Comment we have the report that James delivered to the AGM on 28 June 2022.



Introduction

We have made it to the end of another challenging year. Constant disruptions due to Covid and weather have required a much more dynamic approach to our season. Regular calendar updates have been required and it was a real juggle to fit all of our events in. I am happy to say that we managed to do just that!

Committee

Once again a special thanks goes out to our committee and other club members who have helped throughout the year. Jim has continued with his role as treasurer as has Greg with secretary. Murray has continued his good work with the Gulf Classic and with organising all of the club's sponsorship. This year Tim, Flip, and AJ have all joined the committee. Tim has been managing the Bilgewater and has been busy adding new features to this magazine. Flip has been organising our social media, liaising with NZTYA and YNZ, and has been involved with a further modernisation of the club's website (go check it out). AJ has been getting to grips with some of the social aspects as well as learning how to manage our club's new handicapping system with Murray.

Compound

For the first half of the season Wayne continued his good work with the compound. Midway through the season he stepped down from this position and we were lucky enough to have Hugh step up into this role. We continue to have our compound at near capacity. A few new boats have joined our compound and it has been good to see them out on the water with the club. It is timely to remind members that we are a sailing club not a boat storage business!

Between Wayne, Hugh, and Murray the compound is in good shape and we now have an extra water tank to take the pressure off during those busy days where we risked running out of water in the past.

A special thanks to Dave for keeping an eye on the compound, and for helping members who have difficulty while up in Kawakawa Bay. Also to Allan Geddes and Darren Johnson for their continued efforts to combat the compound weeds.

Racing

As I mentioned, the racing season has been a bit “dynamic”. We managed to get one race in before Covid turned up AGAIN. Then once the Covid situation had cleared we were able to put together a new calendar. Apart from a couple of events where the weather wasn't looking great, we managed to get a good turnout to our events. Once again led by the Trailer Yachts who continue to have good numbers, including some new members.

This year we decided to make some changes to how we run our sailing programmes. The first change was a switch from our old handicapping system to a system managed by HALSAIL. This has proven to be very successful and has been a painless switch.

The second change was to reduce the Trailer Yachts down to one division due to low numbers of smaller trailer yachts. With the switch to Halsail, the need to run two divisions was less important. This is likely to continue into the next season.

At our premier event, the Gulf Classic, we once again increased our number of entries. In recent years only 2014 beats the number of entrants. I had a little accident so didn't make the start, but I think we all witnessed a well managed event. The weather definitely didn't play ball this year. With extremely light winds it was always going to require an adjustment to the course. Roland and Murray did a superb job of managing this situation with most boats completing the revised course in the expected time frame.

Social

From a social perspective we continue to have good participation at our monthly Nog-n-Natters, particularly the growing tradition of having a midwinter dinner at the RSA. We were lucky to have some good speakers at our evenings and I know I personally have learnt a lot. A special thanks to Dean for continuing to run his safety events. The beach gatherings also continue to be well attended which adds to the appeal of our club events.

Moving Forward

Moving into next season, it is my hope that we can consolidate some of the changes we have made. I would like to thank every club member who has joined us this season. Fingers crossed we can have an uninterrupted season with good weather and great company. I look forward to seeing you all out on the water.

James

KEELER SAILING OPPORTUNITY FOR TWO TEENAGERS

Jim Pasco has kindly offered spots for two teenagers who are keen to learn the ropes on a race boat, to crew on his Farr 1020 'Acushla' for the winter series race days. The racing is with Pine Harbour Cruising Club in Auckland and is every Sunday fortnight from 10 July to 18 September.

Jim will take them from Hamilton to Auckland and back each race day at no cost. They just need to be keen to learn how to sail and race in a competitive group of sailors, and need to be consistent. Contact Jim on 021-143 1199.



'Acushla' is looking pretty sharp right now, having just had a hull clean and polish

AROUND THE FLEET

With the Squadron AGM having been held on 28 June, we welcome **Russell Osborne** and **Rodger Bonnett** as new members of the committee for the coming season.

With winter in full swing, activity for some of our members over the past month has moved to undertaking annual boat maintenance. Other members have escaped the cold to warmer destinations overseas, while a few hardy members are still out there sailing. Here's some of the ones we know about.

Ged and Kay Arbuckle have been over in the UK where they presented the Squadron's pennant (that we signed at the recent prizegiving dinner) to the Sailing Club at Porlock where our late member John Pollard was born. Ged and Kay went out sailing with John's brother Hugh and in the photo below, Ged is seen hoisting the WYS pennant while out sailing on Hugh's keeler.



Murray Pearce has been racing his Davidson 35 keeler 'Afterguard' in the Mercury Bay Boat Club's winter series. At last count he was running about mid-fleet in the results. Stick with it Murray and hopefully move up the leaderboard!

Dean and Nola Herrmann are currently in Opuia on their keeler 'Masterplan'.

As mentioned earlier **Jim Pasco**, with several of our members as crew, has been sailing his Farr 1020 'Acushla' in the Pine Harbour Cruising Club's winter series. So far in second place overall after four races.

At the time of writing this edition **Alan Macdonald** is understood to be sailing to Vanuatu on a catamaran, while former member and Bilgewater editor **Mark Sargent** has sailed up to Fiji.

Alex and Jenny Ross have had two weeks bareboat charter sailing in the Whitsunday Islands in Queensland, the first week on a Jeanneau 40 keeler, the second week on a 10 metre catamaran. **Tim and Jo-Ann Hayward** joined them for the second week on the catamaran. See the writeup on page 7.

Robert and Jeanne-Marie Schumann have taken to the hull of their Farr 7500 'Innisfree' with Grunt Klenashine followed by a coat of wax. Amazing what a bit of elbow grease with the right product can achieve!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Nog 'n Natter

Squadron Winter Dinner

WHEN: Tuesday 26 July from 6pm.

WHERE: The RSA club at 50 Rostrevor St Hamilton. Car parking available at the rear of the building.

FORMAT: Gathering from 6pm with Nog 'n Natter formalities from 6.30pm followed by dinner.

Note: The RSA is a community club. Please sign in on our squadron register on entry to the club.

Winter Racing

For trailer yacht members looking for a race opportunity during winter there is the Ngaroto Sailing Club's annual midwinter John Dixon Memorial Regatta on 23 and 24 July, and the BOPTYS winter series held at Lake Rotoiti.

THE BEST WAY TO SPEND THE FIRST WEEK OF WINTER? How about on a Charter Yacht in the Whitsunday Islands?

By Tim and Jo-Ann Hayward

Jo and I have been very fortunate to be able to spend our winters in Australia since 2014. I guess it's one of the benefits of getting older!! However, Covid precluded this for the 2020 and 2021 winters. With the border reopening recently, and after waiting 5 hours 47 minutes for Air NZ to answer the phone and resolve a problematic flight credit from 2020, we finally had a flight booked to Brisbane for late May 2022.

A couple of weeks before we departed, we received a late night text from Squadron members Alex and Jenny Ross saying they had a yacht chartered in the Whitsundays and with another couple pulling out, would we like to join them and a couple of their friends. We texted back to say we already had a flight to Brisbane, so it was really a 'no-brainer'. We just had to get from Brisbane to the Whitsundays, and to dodge Covid in the two weeks before we left NZ.

Alex and Jenny joined the Squadron in early 2021. Having been power boaters for some time, they purchased their MacGregor 26x ('Amethyst') to help them transition into sailing, and they have cruised the Gulf extensively in 'Amethyst' this past season. They had originally arranged the Whitsunday charter two years ago to learn to sail. That was precluded by Covid and they had held a charter credit until now. It was for a two week bareboat charter; the first week on a Beneteau 40 keeler, the second on a Seawind 10.6m catamaran. This would give them a chance to compare life on a monohull with that on a catamaran. Jo and I were able to join them and their good friends Julio and Jen Nascimento from Sydney for the second week on the catamaran.



The Seawind 10.6 Metre Catamaran

Getting into Australia under the current Covid regime was quite simple. We just had to download our NZ international vaccination certificates and then complete online Australian Covid entry forms before we departed. It seems those online forms cleared the way and our passports were the only documents we then had to produce at the border. In Australia, after you left the airport it was as if Covid never existed – we have hardly seen a mask or any other Covid evidence anywhere.

Travelling to the Whitsundays

The Whitsunday Islands are approximately 1,000km north of Brisbane. The charter yacht bases are at Airlie Beach or at nearby Shute Harbour. The flight from Brisbane is around 100 minutes on a 737 to Proserpine airport. It is then a 30 - 40 minute shuttle ride to Airlie Beach or Shute Harbour; a longer trip if you are last off the shuttle as you get a tour of the Airlie Beach suburbs as we did. 737's also fly into Hamilton Island where you can arrange to collect your yacht for a modest additional fee.

About the Whitsunday Islands

There are 74 islands in the general Whitsunday group, all in quite close proximity – a bit like the Islands in the Hauraki Gulf, but largely uninhabited. Most of the islands are national parks and there are walking tracks to suit all ranges of fitness. I have to say that Australia does its coastal parks well. The Whitsundays are very scenic, with white sand beaches, bush or rock faces down to the beaches, clear water and abundant coral providing great snorkeling opportunities.



Plenty of Opportunities for Exercise – the Whitsunday Peak (437m)

Sailing in the Whitsundays

As the islands are within Australia's Great Barrier Reef there is protection from ocean swells, but long enough fetches for a moderate wind chop/swell to develop in a strong breeze. There are numerous protected anchorages you can sneak into for the night depending on the wind direction. Though sheltered, some anchorages can be subject to brief, strong wind squalls (locally known as 'bullets') during windy periods.

It helps to have a guidebook to the islands and the anchorages, and these are provided on the charter yachts. Most of the islands are fringed by coral, and to prevent damage you are not permitted to anchor within the coral. The 'no anchoring zones' are marked from the shoreline with white triangular buoys. Beyond the no anchoring zone, many of the bays have public mooring buoys that are available on a 'first in, first served' basis, with the length of mooring time limited to an overnight stay. The buoys have a coloured stripe and associated written description that tells you what length of boat and wind limit they are rated for e.g. one rating being 'monohulls to 20 metres, multihulls to 18 metres, up to 24 knots of wind'. Elsewhere, where there is sand, such as at Whitehaven Beach and Cid Harbour, there is freedom to anchor anywhere.

We were generally able to pick up mooring buoys where we needed to, but this might be more difficult during the busiest seasons. In most of the bays on our trip there were only a handful of yachts and it is possible to find very isolated spots well away from any crowd.



We had four days with little wind, three that were quite breezy

One of the greatest things about our trip was the friendships we had in getting to better know Alex and Jenny, plus Julio and Jen who we had not met previously. Big ups to Alex and Jenny for putting together a crew who would have so much fun together.



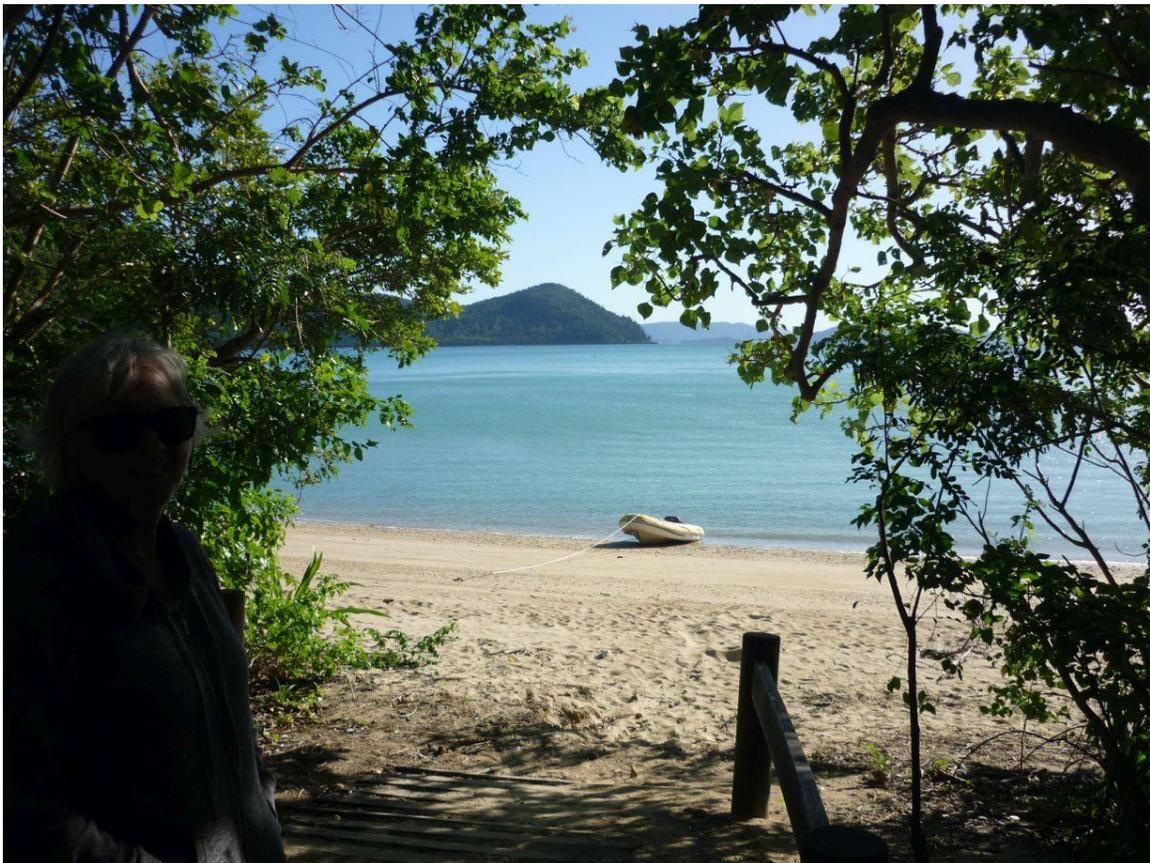
A Great Crew Makes for an Excellent Sailing Holiday!



Overlooking Whitehaven Beach – Picture Postcard Views Everywhere



Calm Anchorages



Bush Down to the Beach



Plus Some Choppy Crossings

About the Charter

The catamaran had ample double berths (not very wide, but quite OK), a good gas fridge/freezer, gas hot water and shower, but surprisingly no gas detector as far as we could tell. Linen, pillows and towels were also provided. There was an inflatable tender with a 6hp outboard, and snorkeling gear, but 'stinger suits' had to be separately hired. The stinger season runs from November to May inclusive, but we didn't want to take any chances - you really don't want to be stung in the water by stingers! The catamaran was powered by two 9.9hp 4 stroke outboards which, much to our surprise, pushed it along at a good speed when the motors were needed.

All food had to be purchased in advance (at Airlie Beach where there is a supermarket) as that is your only opportunity. We did start to run low on some food and water on the last two days but we managed to stretch both out successfully.

The catamaran was easy to sail with a self-tacking, furling headsail and a simple mainsail setup. The mainsail had a double purchase halyard system, had full length battens with lazy jacks and a sail bag on the boom that made raising and lowering it very easy. The charter company seemed to like everyone to reef at anything over about 15 knots of breeze, but the only time we depowered was via a few turns of the headsail furler when the wind was gusting to 25 knots.

It was beneficial that we had two engineers on board (not me) as we had some issues to sort out with the settings of the battery charging system (solar and motor) that resulted in a flat battery, and also some issues with the tender's outboard, both of which Alex managed to fix.

The charter company were in our view rather conservative and prescriptive, but I guess they get some pretty inexperienced people chartering their boats. They expected you to not leave an anchorage until 0800 hours (I don't know why) and to be anchored for the night by 1600 hours (it

wasn't dark until about 1730 hours). You were required to do two radio scheds each day at 0845 hours and again when anchored for the night.

The charter company had to approve your overnight anchorages (some anchorages in the guidebook were precluded by them) and they wanted to know your depth and how much chain you had out. They even required 50 metres of chain when anchored in just 4 metres of water. We did have an issue one night when we took the last mooring buoy available at Chalkies Beach that we found *'may not'* have fully complied with all the rules. However, skipper Alex skillfully talked them around "the mooring buoy is quite faded, the stripe might be yellow or it might be green, or it could be blue"! After all, it was a windless night.

I contrast all of that with a Fountaine-Pajot catamaran that we chartered with friends some years ago in the Tuamotu Atolls north-east of Tahiti. We had no contact with the charter company at all during our 10 days and we even sailed 90 miles between islands one night. However there was an insurance excess of 10,000 Euros!

One more thing – take midge spray for when you are on land in the Whitsundays, as the midges will munch you up with glee if they like the look of you!



Tropical Fish Around the Coral Reefs



Hmmmm!



Short on Food for the Last Night (Note the Sausages), but the Sunset Made Up for It



We all had a wonderful time and a big thanks to Alex and Jenny

LIFE AFLOAT – June/July 2022

As first mate aboard SV Masterplan, I've been asked to share a few impressions, thoughts and life lessons. I hope this month's offering will give you a glimpse into ... **Life Afloat** ...



Myth Buster: Sailing Boats are Quiet

Sailing boats are quiet (maybe only when compared to a launch).

A chorus of creaks and clinks is backed by the slapping of water on the hull and punctuated by the occasional slat of a sail or the whining of the autopilot. Even on a quiet night, whether at anchor or in a marina berth, there's always that background scratchy sound made by those snapping shrimps hard at work.

There's a First Time for Everything

Coming across a tuatara on Tiritiri Matangi and noticing that he ambled happily right across my path and only froze when the hand-held VHF radio crackled to life in my bag. The poor thing was still stuck there when I returned from Fisherman's Bay half an hour later!

What's that Smell?!

It's a bit like a brewery but there's no home-made beer on board (yet!). It's the home-made Bokashi Bin (which you can only smell when opening it to add the day's contribution of food scraps and teabags). A sprinkling of inoculated 'bran' promotes fermentation rather than rotting and the small amount of vinegar-like liquid that collects in the bottom bucket can be used to clean the galley drain pipes. It's a winner!

Broken, Lost and Worn Out

The captain's cap – knocked off by the mainsheet when putting up the sail – retrieved soon afterwards in a successful MOB drill.

Straw hat (worn by the bridesmaid at our wedding) – blown off at Half Moon Bay Marina – retrieved in the dinghy and dried off.

'First World' Problems

Oh for an upright fridge with shelves! So much rummaging for that item you know is down there somewhere...

Fair Exchange

While we no longer have the pleasure of watching thoroughbred foals frolicking in the paddocks of the Waikato stud farm that surrounded our place, we now get to enjoy dolphins teasing our bow as they criss-cross our course.

Land Longings

Weekly veggie boxes from my green-fingered friend in Eureka – the shop prices are crazy (especially anywhere close to a marina)!

Quotable Quote

“Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Farewell until next time, Nola Herrmann ☺

Nola also points out that the annoying organ-like noise mentioned in a previous edition of 'Life Afloat', that was thought to be caused by wind in the furler, has now been found to come from a halyard.

Fortunately it just had to be slackened off slightly, which has resolved it. Yes, we all know the joy of finally conquering an annoying boat noise that proves elusive to track down!!

SPOT QUIZ - WHERE AND WHAT IS THIS?

Here's a nautical question to tax the mind while we're perhaps stuck inside in inclement weather.

Where and what is Point Nemo?

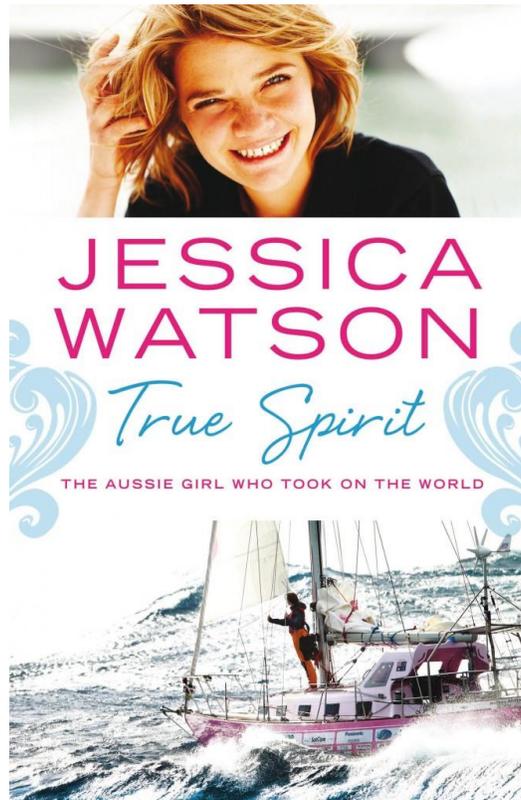
See page 23 for the answer.

BOOK REVIEW – “True Spirit” by Jessica Watson

With winter upon us, it is a great time to read sailing books.

If you are anything like me, a lot of the pleasure I derive from sailing is the sense of adventure and achievement in just getting there (wherever ‘there’ might be), relying solely on the wind, the water, our relatively small yachts, and our ability to sail them. It will therefore come as no surprise that I am a fan of sailing adventure books.

This winter seemed a good time for me to read “True Spirit”, the account of 16 year old Jessica Watson’s solo, non-stop, unassisted global circumnavigation. This was all the more pertinent as this winter Jo and I are based on the Sunshine Coast in Australia, just a few minutes drive from Buderim and Mooloolaba where Jessica’s Sparkman and Stephens 34 foot keelboat was refitted and re-launched prior to her circumnavigation. Her boat was named *Ella’s Pink Lady* – partly because she was painted pink and partly because the cosmetics company Ella Bache became a sponsor.



I have found the book to be a riveting account of a remarkable adventure. After all, just think back to what you (and I) were doing when we were aged 16. Jessica’s voyage took 210 days during which she never saw another person and covered 24,285 nautical miles at an average speed of 4.8 knots. While her route included crossing the equator, much of her sailing was in the Southern Ocean where she rounded four of the world’s major and oftentimes treacherous capes – Cape Horn, the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Leeuwin and the South-East Cape of Tasmania.

This was never going to be an easy voyage, but major dramas began even before Jessica had departed. However, she made clear that in undertaking this venture she was neither fearless nor rash. Nor was she a tower of strength, weighing in at just 50kg. Despite her many detractors, she firmly believed that sailing ability (she had completed more than 10,000 sea miles before departing), knowledge obtained from other solo sailors, diligent study and careful risk management would be the keys to a successful voyage.

For this review I have decided to quote several pages of the text, which will launch you into a few parts of the story, hopefully creating a desire for you to read more. It starts with the fateful day when Jessica was completing her final sea trials off Brisbane.

In Jessica's words:

" *Ella's Pink Lady* and I were about 15 nautical miles east of Stradbroke Island by this point. I'd have liked to have been further offshore, away from the local fishing fleets and possible shipping, however the current and earlier light winds meant I hadn't sailed very far since leaving. After scanning the horizon, checking the radar and AIS and checking my alarms, I climbed into my bunk, still wearing my lifejacket and harness.

A horrible bone-shuddering explosion of noise woke me as *Ella's Pink Lady* was suddenly stopped in her tracks and violently spun around. Jumping up as the awful grinding noise continued, a quick glance up through the companionway told me that we'd collided with something huge, a ship. The sky was a wall of black steel, obscuring stars and towering over me. The roar of engines filled my head and my whole world.

Leaning into the cockpit, I grabbed at the tiller, flicked off the autopilot and tried to steer us. It was hopeless. There was nowhere to go, nothing I could do. Shuddering and screeching, we were being swept down the ship's hull. Another glance told me that the ship's stern, with its bridges protruding, was fast approaching. The noises were getting louder and, knowing that the mast and rigging were about to come down, I rushed back below for some protection.

With my hands over my head I sat on my bunk as a whole new and far more terrible set of noises began. A few short seconds passed but to me they felt like hours. The cupboard next to me ripped apart as the chainplate behind the bulkhead splintered it into a million pieces. The boat heeled to one side then suddenly sprung upright with the loudest explosion yet as entangled rigging freed itself and crashed to the deck.

When the boat steadied and the roar of engines started to fade I went back on deck. It was a mess. There was rigging, lines and huge rusty flakes of black paint and slivers of metal from the ship's hull everywhere. Beyond *Ella's Pink Lady* I could see the dark outline of the huge ship's stern slipping away unaffected, leaving us at a stop in the foaming white slipstream.

Shocked and disbelieving, my head still reeling, I desperately tried to come to grips with what had happened while checking the bilges for water and the hull for damage. All I could think about was 'my poor boat', and while flicking switches to see what equipment still worked it became a sort of chant – 'my poor boat, my poor, poor boat'. I was numb and still shaking off the last remnants of sleep; being scared hadn't crossed my mind. My only thoughts were for *Ella's Pink Lady*".

Then:

“ Back on deck , alone and miles from land, it took me over two hours to slowly clear the deck, lash the broken rigging in place and cut the tangled headsail away. I had to pause frequently to lean over the side and throw up as my earlier queasiness had turned into full-on seasickness. Finally, I turned on the engine to motor the six hours to the Gold Coast. How quickly everything had changed.”

And later on, reflecting back on that disastrous event:

“In the coming months, when *Ella's Pink Lady* was thrown violently about by the wind and waves, or when home felt like a million miles away as we drifted, becalmed, and the days ran into each other in slow motion, I was able to look back on that day after the collision with the 63,000 tonne bulk carrier *Silver Yang* and draw strength from knowing I'd held myself together when all I'd really wanted to do was fall apart.”

After Ella's Pink Lady had been repaired, and having weathered numerous uninformed but vocal critics of her age and sailing ability, Jessica finally departed on her circumnavigation. It was clear that she enjoyed the solitude, the challenges and the rhythms of the endless ocean. After two months sailing, having crossed the Tasman Sea, the equator and now closing in on Cape Horn she writes:

“My favourite pastime lately has become standing in the companionway, under the dodger, sheltered from the wind, watching the world go by. You could say that I'm entertained by small things but I still find watching each wave roll under *Ella's Pink Lady*, with the occasional one dumping over us, just fascinating”.



Then, three months into the voyage, after successfully rounding Cape Horn, on her way across the Southern Atlantic, the conditions became rather challenging:



Photo Taken Later On – Off the South Coast of Australia

“I wasn’t worried as the weather started picking up but when the wind instruments showed gusts were coming through at over 60 knots I started to realise this wasn’t just another gale. I hadn’t expected it, so by the time I lashed down the mainsail it wasn’t done as well as I would have liked. I would come to regret leaving this so long.

As the waves were still building, I spent the first part of the storm out in the cockpit, hand-steering and then when it became too wild I sat watching over the electric autopilot as it fought to keep us running down the waves. The wind was freezing and thick with spray and it hammered in. It bit into any exposed skin and hurt.

As the storm got stronger I was completely mesmerised by the waves. I was just completely awestruck. I’d seen big waves before but this was very different. They were huge walls of water. I’d visualised them for years, pinned up pictures of fierce Southern Ocean waves on the bulkhead of *Home Abroad*, but nothing had prepared me for their power and their beauty.

Ella’s Pink Lady handled herself as well as could be expected with just the little storm jib up but after a few hours my nerves were jangling. The storm kept building and I was yelling almost constant encouragement to the boat and the autopilot. If a particularly big wave reared up behind us I’d loudly call out a warning so I could be heard over the howling wind, ‘Okay girls, here’s a big one coming, get ready!’

As the wave’s crest knocked us sideways I hung on to whatever I could and kept yelling, ‘Hold it, hold it, come on, you can do this!’ I’m not sure now if I was talking to *Ella’s Pink Lady* or myself. As the wave picked up we’d surf down the face with me yelling ‘Steady, steady.’

We’d hit the trough and for a few seconds it would be quiet (at least quieter) as the wind was muffled by the mountains of water on both sides of the boat. I wouldn’t have to yell as loudly as

I said 'Good job girls, good job team.' As I felt the boat start to ride the up the next wave I'd shout, 'One more, just one more. We can do this!'

I'm sure the yelling did more for me than *Ella's Pink Lady* and the autopilot, but by keeping my voice strong and sounding so positive I almost tricked myself into thinking I was cool, calm and collected rather than completely freaked out.

After a few hours the wind kept growing stronger and the waves became massive dark mountains with faces completely streaked white. The white tops were foaming and curling like they do when breaking on a beach. There was nothing else I could do on deck, and I was getting really cold so I decided it was time to strap myself in below and wait it out.

And later on during that storm:

The third knockdown was the one that freaked me out. I was at the nav table at the time, filling in the log book and trying to keep myself occupied when I heard a huge thundering roar. The closest thing I can compare it to is an aeroplane engine, only throatier and scarier. I just had enough time to prop myself before *Ella's Pink Lady* was picked right up, turned and then thrown upside down into the trough of the wave. I was clinging on to the handholds and my feet had inched up the wall, then onto the roof as we went over. Things were flying around the cabin even though I'd tried to get everything secure. I kept yelling to *Ella's Pink Lady* to hang in there and that she'd be okay.

I would love to be able to tell you what was going through my head right then but I can't because there wasn't anything! I was in a numb state of complete disbelief. Once we were back upright I risked a quick glance out the companionway slide. I couldn't see that much and there was no way I could go too far outside to have a proper look but the cockpit was a complete disaster zone. The solid steel targa and its inch-thick tubes were dented out of shape and the wind vane was sitting on a strange angle. The boom had moved and knocked big chunks out of the dodger. That wave had to have been incredibly powerful to do damage like that. I didn't stay looking for long, just in case there was another with the same force close by.

To say I was pretty worried after that third knockdown is probably an understatement. I wasn't crying or getting hysterical. I went into this very sombre, rational mood and started running through different options to possible outcomes. I was planning what to do if things got even worse."

But to finish this review on a happy note.....

Just 2 days later, Jessica records:

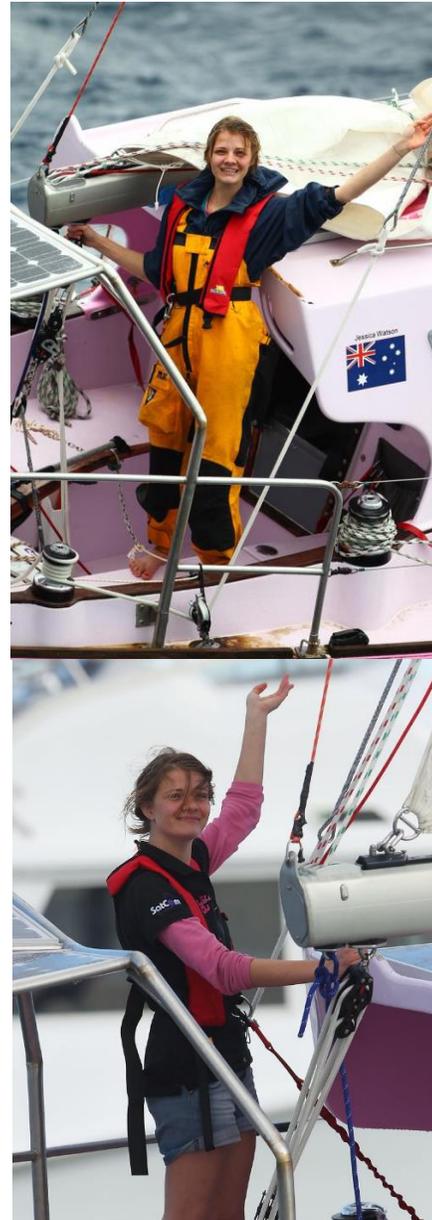
"I'm starting to worry that it's all going to be over and we're going to be home before I'm ready".

Then after another 6 days:

"Does anyone object if I give Sydney a miss and go around for a second lap?"

And if you think the love of sailing and being at sea on a small sailing boat must surely eventually wear off, after 7 months sailing she then writes:

"The problem with this lovely weather and the amazing starry nights I've been getting, is that I'm really not sure I want the voyage to end! I could go on forever like this".



And having successfully managed to sail solo, non-stop, unassisted around the world, guess what Jessica was looking forward to as one of her first goals to achieve when she arrived back in Australia to get her learner's drivers licence of course!

Following her voyage, she was named the 2011 Young Australian of the Year, before being awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2012. You can read the whole story in **True Spirit** which is published by **Hachette Australia, 2010**. An engrossing read that I highly recommend.

Bilgewater Ed.

POINT NEMO - WHERE AND WHAT IS IT?

Here's the answer. **Point Nemo** is the location in the ocean that is farthest away from any land. Officially known as "the oceanic pole of inaccessibility," it is located at 48°52.6'S 123°23.6'W.

The closest landmasses are Ducie Island (one of the Pitcairn Islands) to the north, one of the Easter Islands to the northeast, and Maher island off the coast of Antarctica to the south.



Scientists apparently chose to call the location "Nemo" because it is Latin for "no one" and as a reference to Jules Verne's submarine captain from *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*.

The location is so isolated that the closest people to Nemo are not even on Earth. According to the BBC, astronauts aboard the International Space Station are around 258 miles from the Earth's surface at any given time. Since the inhabited area closest to Point Nemo is more than 1,000 miles away, the humans in space are closer to it than those on land!

Due to its remoteness and distance from shipping routes, the area around Nemo was chosen as a "spaceship graveyard." Because autonomous spaceships, satellites, and other space junk are not designed to functionally survive re-entry into Earth's atmosphere (the heat usually destroys them), scientists needed to select an area where there would be an extremely low risk of any humans being struck with flying space-debris. Since 1971, more than 263 pieces of space junk have crashed into the area.

You just might pass over it next time you are sailing to Cape Horn, but keep a lookout overhead!

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