

Peter Luke

SEACALL

THE UNOFFICIAL LOGBOOK OF THE
CRUISING YACHT CLUB
OF AUSTRALIA



NO 4 VOLUME 1
NOVEMBER 1952

OBITUARY

MR. W. LIEBERMAN

The death of Bill Lieberman came as a great blow to all members of the yachting fraternity, particularly of this Club, of which he was a member and our honorary Solicitor since soon after its inception. His cheerful personality, his ever-ready smile and his deep sense of humour will be sadly missed. He combined those admirable qualities of gentleness and strength and few people were aware of his outstanding scholastic attainments, for he never paraded his brilliance, nor sought to overawe with it.

A yachtsman in the true sense of the word, he was a great supporter of ocean racing and an expert navigator, having made the Sydney/Hobart trip on a number of occasions. During the war years he did a grand job with his boat, "STORMKING", in the Volunteer Coastal Patrol.

When stricken with the incurable complaint from which he ultimately died, Bill never lost any of the courage or strength of purpose that was so characteristic of him. With an indomitable will-power he offered himself as a "guinea-pig" for scientific research in an effort to combat the dread scourge, cancer, maintaining the while a cheerfulness which belied the end which awaited him. In this respect he was a source of inspiration to everyone.

The world is the poorer for his passing.

F.A.H.



CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA
NOTICE OF MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Monthly General Meeting of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia will be held at the Club premises at Rushcutters Bay on Wednesday, 19th November at 8 p.m.

- Business: 1. Welcome to new members.
2. Confirmation of minutes of last meeting.
3. Address by Sir James Bissett

Notice: Mr. D. Allworth has been appointed Manager of Rushcutter Yacht Services and Club Secretary as from 27th October following the resignation of Mr. Allan Owens.

Next Club Fixture: Port Hacking race 22nd November R.O.R.C. with penalties and allowances.

OFFICE BEARERS:

Commodore	Sverre Berg
Vice Commodore	J. Halliday
Rear Commodore	H.S. Evans
Hon. Treasurer	E. Le Brun
Secretary	D. Allworth

Club House: Beach Road,
Rushcutters Bay:
Tel. FB.2128

Note: Contributions and Editorial matter may be sent to the Secretary or to Greig Neave, 14 Waruda Street, Kirribilli.

EDITORIAL

Well! we're still afloat, but a few more hands on deck would be a great help. One thing which requires early attention and which does not call for a full length article, is a name for the magazine. As the magazine will be octavo, that is only slightly larger than it's present size, a name of about six letters would be ideal for set out though of course this is not an all important factor.

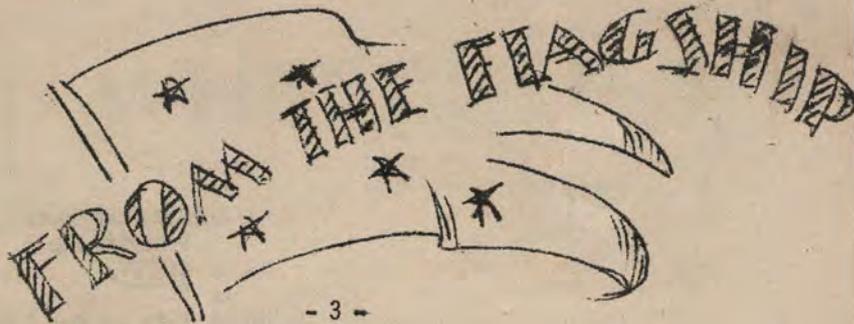
The Commodore favours "Southern Cross" which is a very apt title having only the disadvantage of length and surely you "Ocean Wallopers" have some ideas on the subject so let's have them. A bottle of rum (God Help you) will be squandered on the author of the selected title.

Being in somewhat of a flat spin to produce the last issue to schedule we were guilty of a few editorial breaches of courtesy and hasten herein to acknowledge Peter Luke's fine article "THE OCEAN WALLOPER" (which phrase we have taken the liberty of borrowing) and John Royle's puckish verses, for which belated acknowledgements we should be boyled in oyle.

G.G.N.

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ADVENTURES, UNLIMITED

The other day two young people set off from Sydney in their dreamship with the intention of sailing round the world. There were just the two of them, both inexperienced in sea faring, but both undoubtedly full of trust and confidence in each other as well as in their craft. He had acquired a sextant and swatted up some navigation in his spare time, and she was to be the cook, of course. Their first port of call was to be Lord Howe Island, but they had the misfortune to run into bad weather, which evidently played merry Hell with them and their boat. After considerable groping about on the wild Ocean and asking their way from passing steamers, they eventually staggered into Newcastle, the boat in a mess with torn sails and the crew decidedly the worse for wear.

But undaunted, they have set off again. How far they will get this time, is anybody's guess. Because the long history of small boat voyages is packed with tales of ventures undertaken by inexperienced people, often in unsuitable craft. Many of them succeeded. How many failed, we do not know. But before we start throwing brickbats, don't let us forget that when Joshua Slocum sailed off in his buxom "Spray" there were plenty of scoffers, and quite a few who thought the old man had gone daft. His adventures have of course become a classic, and it can safely be asserted that he set the fashion, blazed the watery trail, so to speak, by proving that long voyages in small boats are quite feasible. That he perished during his second venture, is a different story, the reverse side of the medallion. What happened we do not know. So one can only speculate on what an unkind fate sent him, a hurrying steamer tearing into him at night, perhaps, or did some unfriendly natives do the deed? We do know that Slocum was a very experienced sailor and navigator. His name will always be revered by all who carry in their makeup a longing for finding out what is on the other side of the Bay.

But to hark back to our young starry eyed couple. They have my sympathy because they do not realize what they have really set out to do. That they are somewhat foolish goes without saying; but if it wasn't for foolish attempts made by people with various kinds of bees in their bonnets, there would be considerably less achievements to record. After all, the pioneer spirit is what really has set the world on its feet. Whether that took the form of a covered wagon, a crazy contraption for flying into the air, or voyaging in small boats; they all boil down to the same urge, and they all add to our sum total of knowledge. (continued page 2)

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I hope they will make it, and I wish them success. None the less, it would have been better had they endeavoured to gain some practical experience and knowledge before setting out.

She who is to do the cooking has my special sympathy. Cooking at sea in a 30 foot boat is a job that taxes the ingenuity, patience and physical endurance of the toughest.

But one thing is certain. If they ever reach America with the affection they have for each other un-impaired by the hardships and toil of the voyage, the disillusion which are inevitable through living in such a confined space under the most trying conditions, then they can safely get spliced.

They really are in love.

S.B.

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"Somerset House",
9 Martin Place,
SYDNEY.

15th October 1952.

The Editor,
Cruising Yacht Club Magazine.

Dear Sir,

I would like to bring before your notice something which has been brought firmly to my mind recently by the world cruise of the yacht "PEER GYNT".

Here are two people who, presumably, have never been to sea in a yacht before, setting off on a dangerous journey without the knowledge necessary to make a success of it.

There was another instance recently of three people who set out from Brisbane on a world cruise, which ended (fortunately without disaster) only a few miles from their starting point. Those people were lucky they were not all lost. There are many more cases of people who have set out and have never been heard of again; in fact, they are too numerous to mention.

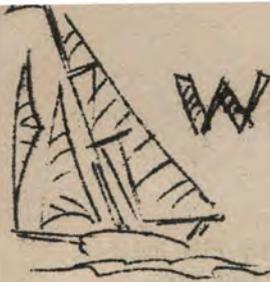
I feel, Sir, that all Sailing Clubs should ban together in an effort to have this sort of thing stopped. When disaster overtakes such foolhardy people other lives are risked, time wasted, and public money spent in attempting rescues.

It is about time each State in Australia set about forming committees of competent citizens, capable of questioning people who propose setting out on such world cruises, and assuring themselves that the craft is seaworthy, and the crew sufficiently competent to undertake the trip. When both crew and craft are competent there is always an element of danger, but when they are not, the hazards are much greater; in fact, judging from the number of craft that have set out and never been heard of again, the difficulties facing the unskilled yachtsman appear to be too hazardous to be overcome.

To calmly sit by and watch a man commit suicide is against all human principles! Is there any difference in allowing these unskilled yachtsmen to set out on world cruises without specialised knowledge of the craft they sail, and a full realisation of the hazards they face.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) D.R. GREENBERG
(D.R. Greenberg)



WHAT SHIP



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KETCH "HORIZON"

.. Sverre Berg

"Horizon" was designed by W.D. Bailey, Naval Architect of Como, N.S.W. and built in Hobart in 1939 by Mr. Southy, a commercial artist. Like so many good boats before her - and since - she grew up in the backyard. But as I am forever meeting tradesmen in Hobart who claimed they helped to build her, I do not think it would be quite correct to describe her as Amateur Built .. however, that may be, she is a very fine product, well and truly put together, of good materials, strong and staunchly built .. a bit on the heavy side, perhaps, especially viewed against the post-war trend of light displacement boats.

Her planking is Huon Pine with Colerytop deck. Deck beams of Tasmanian Oak, frames are Spotted Gum. She has some lovely grown knees, I believe they are Ti Tree. Her dimensions are: 40' o.a., 35' on the waterline with a draft of 6 feet. Beam 11'. She has a fairly long keel and canoe stern. Ballast is all lead, of which about 3/4 ton is carried inside.

She is a Bermudan rigged Ketch with a sail area of about 930 sq. feet in her four working sails, although her rated sail area is 1001 sq. feet.

"Horizon" is essentially a cruising boat, with nice accommodation including four permanent bunks plus settees. There is the usual toilet and wardrobe, with a roomy f'castle for sails. Her auxiliary is a Meadow's Kittiwake, installed about 3 years ago, giving her a speed of about 5 knots in smooth water. A J.A.P. generator charges the lighting batteries independently of the engine.

The main cabin is roomy and there is plenty of head room throughout. A good galley with gas stove to starboard, sink and fresh water pump to port. Ice box. Plenty of lockers for all purposes.

For a Ketch, she is fairly fast, especially off the wind, of course; but she has not won many races, her most important win was the Brunei Island race in 1946. One of the reasons for this is that she rates rather poorly under the R.O.R.C. formula. But she will be remeasured shortly, when I hope I may discover some way of getting her rating down.

As a cruising craft, I think it will be hard to find anything better for her size. Her motion in a seaway is easy and comfortable, and with her good accommodation is a most comfortable craft to go to sea in.

S.B.

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THE BROKEN BAY RACE 25th OCTOBER.

Seven starters faced the gun at 10 a.m. on Saturday 25th October. It was a miserable morning, rainy and with very light airs. Throughout, the race was slow in rather unpleasant conditions with light and variable winds and rain preventing any ship really shewing her paces.

"MOONBI" H.S. Evans was first to complete the course, crossing the finishing line eight hours and forty six minutes after the start, but relinquished the honours to "RIPPLE" R. Hobson, on corrected time with "ELLIDA" J. Halliday, filling third place.

The corrected times of the place getters were as follows:

"RIPPLE" R. Hobson 5 hrs. 52 mins. 2 secs.

"MOONBI" H.S. Evans 5 " 58 " 5 "

"ELLIDA" J. Halliday 5 " 58 " 16 "

The other starters were - "STORNBIRD", "SOLVEIG", "PATIENCE", "WHITE CLOUD", the latter withdrawing and finishing under power.

For the next Club event, the Port Hacking race on the 22nd. November, Masters and crews will no doubt be keeping fingers crossed for a little more consideration from old "HUEY".

SPECIAL NOTE: SYDNEY-HOBART

Prospective starters in the SYDNEY-HOBART event are reminded that the closing date for nominations is Wednesday 10th December, and Dave Allworth, Yacht Services manager, has emphasised that members wishing to slip their craft with the Club yard should contact him as soon as possible.

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BY SHOAL TO MARKET

PETER LUKE

- 7 -

The seaboard of N.S.W. halves itself with Sydney as the divisor into two sections, the North and South Coasts. As the original colony expanded, the great river systems of the North, and the smaller, often man made, harbours of the South offered decentralised points of egress for the produce of the Hinterland. In the days before the advent of railways, semi trailers and air freights, the logical method of transport was by sea. At that time fruit and vegetables grown at Mona Vale, now only an hours drive from town, were brought to Sydney from Pittwater by small sailing vessels.

At the same time settlers in outlying districts required a tremendous range and quantity of goods and these were shipped from Sydney on the outward runs. There were a considerable number of wooden vessels built of local timber on many of the northern rivers and these became engaged on the coastal runs in the days before foreign built steamers took their place.

As the volume of this trade increased, several companies were formed which incorporated in their titles the areas in which they operated. Prominent among these are the Illawarra and South Coast Steam Navigation Co. Ltd., The Newcastle & Hunter River Steamship Co. Ltd., The North Coast Steam Navigation Co. Ltd. These present day firms are the outcome of many past changes and amalgamations which is a separate chapter of history in itself.

Some of the earlier craft on the coast were Rose, Shamrock, Thistle, Ceres, Kiama and William IV, also known as Puffing Billy. The latter was built at Clarence Town in 1831 and traded both north and south of Sydney, until she departed for China in 1862. She was only 104 tons and her engine was 40 Horse power, about the same output as a small English car! The Victoria, built on the North Coast in 1830, was unusual inasmuch as her engine was salvaged from the wrecked Ceres and the builder, using a small cutter built from the timbers of the Ceres, set off for Sydney with the original boiler in tow but unfortunately lost it on the way.

In 1876, before the railway went beyond Newcastle, a notable old timer was the City of Grafton - a paddlewheel steamer of 825 tons. She was engaged in the transport of passengers, general cargo and had a large tween deck specially built for the carriage of cattle. She served the Clarence and Richmond River areas for nearly 40 years. Other ships well known on the North Coast included the Kyogle, Arakoon, Bonalbo, Uki and Nimbin. No story of the coasters would be complete without mention of the colliers or "60 milers" as they have been dubbed, that being the distance from North Head to Nobbys in nautical miles.

With sand bars across river estuaries to contend with, and open anchorages only partly protected by breakwaters to rely on for shelter (contd. page 16

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership:

MILLS, George Newnham, Dentist and Company Manager of 9 Park Avenue, Mosman.

Proposed by A.G. Crompton and F.A. Harris.

Junior Membership:

DAVEY, Morna Ellen, Student, of 37 Marlborough Street, Drummoynne.

Proposed by M.E. Davey and F.J. Barlow.

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Navigation Classes:

Members are recommended to the Navigation Classes being conducted by the Vice-Commodore J. Halliday on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. This series will finish on 20th November.

Members interested in extension of these lectures or desirous of participating in any further series of technical instruction should communicate with the Secretary or Editor.

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The Primrose (contd.)

"Only this" he says, and pulls out from under his bunk a bottle of Scotch. "Iron rations. Let's have a noggin, boys", and together they chant the ship's theme-song:

"The seas is deep, the seas is blue.
But here is good health to me and you.
Ho rally.
The Lord may drop us off our pins,
To feed 'is blooming fishes.
But Lord, forgive us for our sins,
Our sins they is delicious".

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WATCH BELOW

BY CAPTAIN'S TIGER.

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A hearty "welcome aboard" to new members. The Tiger is particularly happy to be shipmates again with Doc. Rowntree who owns "Ambermerle" remember? she took second place on corrected time in the first Sydney Hobart event.

World Cruiser "Ho Ho II" was seen proceeding steadily up harbour into the teeth of that howling westerly on Sunday 2nd November. The Norwegian colours flying bravely. The Skipper should have a good yarn to tell and now that she is in this port what about the press gang doing a job for the benefit of the Friday nighters?

There was some heavy wagering going on the other night after the last very enjoyable meeting and bottles of rum were being laid thick and fast. about the Broken Bay race. Rob Hobson must have known something, couldn't have had his engine going I suppose!

Bill Lieberman has "weighed anchor" and at our last meeting all hands observed one minute thoughtful silence on the passing of this grand sportsman sailor. Fair winds and good landfalls Bill!

Max Lawsons films and breezy address on Big Game Fishing were sheer delight at the last meeting. Those poor fish are not in the race. Max could talk them into the boat! Tom Williamson is no slouch either! The Tiger is relieved that there is no female Tiger cub old enough to be exposed to the blarney of him!

The "few" grogs in excellent company at the club house after a glorious sail on Saturday 1st November were wonderful and the sail back to Neutral Bay in the moonlight with that balmy Nor Easter was marvellous but what the hell is in the rum Dave? Skipper and crew finished up swimming for the pontoon at Neutral Bay and running back home to change because we didn't want to get the car wet. It was decided not to carry the car because someone might have seen us and thought we were drunk. Drunk! nonshenshe!

Saturday afternoon November the oneth. Lauriana at anchor off Taylor Bay. No sign of life aboard. Peek into the wheelhouse. What's that bundle on the settee? Dunno Pat but I think it's alive I can see itss stomach rising and falling. Hardships! the perils of the deep! well cut off ma laigs an call me "Shorty"!

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PREPARATION

...P. Luke

That restless little yawl Wayfarer, will soon be heading for blue waters again. We, her crew, are now approaching the climax of the preparation period. No matter how early fitting out begins, the last rush seems unavoidable. We have urgent consultations. Lists of jobs and supplies grow larger instead of less, until that superb moment when we can say "she's ready". Those fettered by the shore cannot imagine the requirements for a voyage in a small yacht. There are no shops along the road we follow. Everything we need must be thought of in advance. Each bit of gear must work when and if required, and under a wide variety of conditions. On dark nights when the wind is howling, the success of, say changing a sail, depends on the care that was expended weeks before.

Apart from the overhaul of untold details of the rigging, there is the painting and the varnishing. The problem of providing for six hungry sailors during many days and nights is in itself a large undertaking. The miscellaneous list of odd items ranges from ink for writing up the log, to spare leathers for the bilge pump.

Life aboard a yacht at sea is not easy. We know there will be the discomfort of bad weather occasionally, and the worry of navigation in strange waters. There is little sleep and incessant motion. Calms that would exasperate the traveller who is used to maintained schedule. But, we have our rewards and as in other things the greater the striving the richer is the return. No one who has not experienced it can imagine the beauty of a dawn over the quiet ocean, the awe inspired by one's first gale, the thrill of a landfall that repetition never seems to dull.

In these days of spectator sports and organised entertainment there is a personal satisfaction and sense of achievement attained by those who go down to the sea in little ships.

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TECHNICAL TOPICS



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SPLICING THIMBLES

Many Yachtsmen who pride themselves on being able to perform most tasks aboard and about their craft, shy off working an eye splice in wire and have this work done professionally.

Actually there is nothing difficult in working this splice and as with most other tasks practise will soon make perfect. As the old Salts had it, of course, "Different ships, different splices", and most sailors have their own pet splice which will be urged as the Only splice. Navy drill differs from Merchant service drill and so on.

However the splice described here is an old tried and proven one which will not draw and which any Yachtie can quickly learn. It is not easy to follow a description of a splice but if these few notes make you want to try it the first object is already achieved.

Firstly serve the rope with marlin to suit the circumference of the thimble, bend round the thimble and tie securely in place till the splice is finished. Next open out the lay of the end to be spliced, keeping this end to the left hand and number the strands from one to six. Now insert the marline spike into the standing part of the rope close to the throat of the thimble and through two strands and tuck away strand number one through from left to right. Now withdraw the spike and raise one strand only with the point of the spike coming out at the same place as before and tuck end number two through from left to right. Inserting the spike now through the next strand to the left, miss end number three but take number four end and tuck away from left to right as before. Now without removing the spike tuck away end number three behind the spike from RIGHT to LEFT. This is the locking tuck. Now insert the spike under the next strand to the left and tuck away end number five behind and over the spike, following the same procedure with the next strand and end number six and the first tuck is complete. Pull all the ends well down and beat the lay back into position. Now starting with end number one again proceed to tuck the ends in rotation over one strand and under the next as for an ordinary rope splice till the ends have been tucked four times. Beat each tuck down as it is taken to preserve a neat lay; at this point the splice may be tapered by thinning down the ends by say halving the wires forming it and breaking off the surplus wires close into the lay.

If properly done the finished splice will have a plaited appearance and the more stain put on the rope the tighter will it grip. The splice is now ready for serving. Let's try one eh?

THE PRIMROSES

by On d'Beach

Scene: Yacht "Primrose" coming up the coast from Jervis Bay.
Light N.W. wind, just enough to give her a gentle heel
as she steadily makes 3/4 knots through a flat sea.
Time: Early morning after a wet night.

His Nibs scans the seascape with bleary eyes, turns to the helmsman and delivers himself of a fruity harangue on the folly of going to sea in small boats instead of waking up all dry and warm in a nice featherbed. Bill listens, his mind wanders off to the featherbed and "Primrose" shies off her straight and narrow path. The inevitable Wrath of His Nibs descends upon him, but he merely grins into the rising sun as the final exhortation "don't be a bloody lubber all your life" comes with the usual zest and vigour.

Steam being let off, His Nibs calls down the companion hatch:
"What about breakfast, Cook?" "Ready Sir, two minutes".
His Nibs has one more look aloft, his gaze follows the flight of a Mollyhawk as it clumsily rises from the water and half walks, half flies off to starboard.

"Fat, big lumbering good for nothings", he mutters, as he goes below. He seats himself at the cabin table, fills a plate with crispies, showers a generous helping of sugar on top of the heap, then pours milk till the plate is brimful.

"Hm, that's better", he says as he pushes the empty plate away.
"Bring in the Nautchgirls".

"Aye, aye Sir, one brown, one white" from the Cook as he places two boiled eggs before His Nibs.

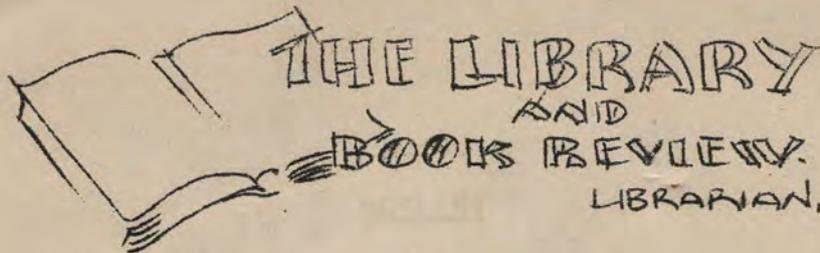
"And never the twain shall meet.....Why aren't the morning papers here?"

"Sir, they haven't turned up yet. But that's really the Valet's job, you know, not the Cook's".

"Oh, tell the old Geezer to go to blazes" comes sleepily from the forward bunk as Dave rolls himself over the bunkboard to join His Nibs at the table. But His Nibs is too quick, and Dave yells as he hits the cabin roof with the sharp end of a marlin spike in his fanny.

And so the pleasantries continued as "Primrose" ploughed her lonely furrow past Wollongong and Bulli, and rounded South Head as the sun went down over the City's skyline.

"Thank God we have arrived. No bread, no meat nor fish, no beer, no baccy. No nothing". His Nibs looks at his crew (cont. page 8)



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THE RESTLESS VOYAGE

This book being an account by Archibald Campbell, Seaman, of his wandering in five oceans from 1806-1812, supplemented and re-indited by Stanley Porteus.

The experiences of Archibald Campbell would have been unusual in any age. Campbell was a native of Paisley, and, although he was put to weaving when he has ten, the sea drew him irresistibly, and he became a sailor by choice.

The grim years of Campbell's life now began: separated from the girl he loved, with little hope of seeing her again, he was illegally impressed into His Majesty's Navy, suffering the lash for his resistance, he eventually deserted to take service in an East Indian bound for China. He was recognised by a King's Officer, and made his escape to an American ship. But Fortune had not changed her wind, and shipwreck on a bleak Aleutian shore was the next ordeal - to be quickly followed by the cruellest trial of all, the amputation of his feet.

It was in the deepest misery and pain that Campbell came to the Sandwich Isles on a Russian ship, there to come under the patronage of the amazingly enlightened King Tamaahmaah and his Queen. In this part of the book life and habits in the islands at that time are described as the crippled seaman must have seen them while he grew in the favour of the King, introducing weaving and receiving land of his own to farm. Yet ever he remained the restless Archie, still eager to rise and "dree his weird" anew. So he parted in sadness from his royal benefactors and came to Rio, where he had further adventures before setting forth again, this time to reach his native Scotland.

And now the reader must himself discover from the book how Campbell found new kindness and an old love.

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PIPE DREAM

....P. Luke

A south east gale is blowing, gusting along the empty streets. Rain lashed leaves turn their backs to the squalls. A night to appreciate a fire and the comfort of a warm bed. What perverse fascination is it that draws back memories of bad weather at sea? It isn't the need for contrast. It's because you have a sneaking desire to be back out there in spite of the worry and discomfort you know goes with it.

We claim that we don't enjoy it. Then why do we go on cruises and take the risk of being caught out? Is it because we hope that sometime we shall be lucky and have a perfect cruise with only pleasant conditions?

Whatever the reason we certainly never forget the impressions received. The incessant motion that renders the simplest task a trial of patience, cunning and a sea going philosophy.

The physical discomforts, the distress of sea sickness. The horridness of wet clothes. Rain and spray on deck. That persistent drip over your bunk and the depressing effect of bilge water sluicing across the floor and gurgling round the ballast. Noise. Pots and pans that keep up an endless clatter. The anxieties that beset the skipper due to poor visibility, uncertainty of position, damage to gear.

There are compensating factors too that we recall. The prospect of your watch below, the satisfaction of a cigarette. The comradeship of a good crew. Pride in your little ship and above all the indescribable pleasure when the weather improves and the morale goes up with the barometer. There is only one way to this world of pipe dreams, take the plunge and join the fraternity of those who go down to the sea in little ships. Lose the false standards of civilization and gain yourself a real perspective.

With a host of memories you weather the dull calms of every day life until the time comes again to point your vessels bowsprit towards the unreachd horizons rim.

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CAP BADGES AND REEFER JACKETS

Don't for a moment think I have gone all "glamorous" or that I would suggest our members should get themselves dolled up in gold lace and brass buttons. But I do think members might adopt the traditional headgear for yachtsmen and sport our cap badge. When all's said'n done, a yachting cap is a useful and smart headgear, infinitely more so than the variety of fireman's caps and other atrocities worn nowadays.

Our active sailors get to places beyond the heads, and I think it would be more suitable and certainly help the prestige of the Club if we went ashore at our destinations, not in the dirty wet trousers and the smelly "sloppy Joes" in which we have sailed and slept for two-three days - but a bit spruced up, in a yachting cap and a reefer jacket. Both very useful and smart garments.

Incidentally, some members seem to be under a misapprehension with regard to the wearing of the uniform. Discussing this the other day with some of our active "hands", I was surprised to learn they were under the impression that cap badges were for owners, and reefer jackets for Flag Officers only. This is pure nonsense, of course. The uniform is the same for all members, and all members are equally entitled to wear it.

Jack, the Cutter.

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By Shoal to Market (continued)

When a black nor'easter sweeps down or a southerly or easterly gale sets giant seas pounding in on the beaches, then the coaster may well beware. Groat combers breaking across a sand bar can overwhelm a small vessel aground there in an instant, or pound a big steel steamer to pieces in a short time. Sailors still remember the gale which caught the Ulmarra off shore. With no safe shelter to leeward to run for, her master fought it out in the open and steamed his gallant little vessel into Sydney days later, just in time to dispel the fear that she had gone to the port of missing ships.

Many others have been less fortunate, and the list of shipwrecks is unhappily long. The steamer Collaroy had the distinction and misfortune to have been wrecked on both sides of the Pacific, in places thousands of miles apart. She was aground for two years on the beach that now bears her name, and later was refloated and converted to sail and subsequently became a total loss on the coast of Chile.

The original Gwydir on the Newcastle run went ashore at Norah Head in 1874 and by an astonishing coincidence her successor, the first screw steamer on the coast, also named Gwydir, was beached on the identical spot in 1942 following a collision. Another instance in which vessels of the same name came to untimely ends, was the case of the two Wollongbar's. The first, Clyde built in 1911 and a popular ship on the Byron Bay run, was caught alongside the jetty during a cyclone in 1921. In an attempt to gain sea room she got under way but shed her propeller and drifted ashore. Salvage operations were begun but subsequent bad weather strained her and she was ultimately abandoned. She was replaced a year later by a new Wollongbar which carried on the traditional schedule, arriving in Sydney every Sunday afternoon. With her brightly painted twin red funnels she became a familiar sight to waterfront residents as she rounded North Head and steamed swiftly up the harbour. This handsome little vessel, after nearly 20 years on the North Coast run was torpedoed and sunk off Port Macquarie in 1943. Her Captain was among those lost.

It is surprising how many wrecks have occurred within sight of lighthouses. The little Pappinbarra, unmistakable with her long thin funnel well aft, became a total loss practically at the base of Point Stephen Light, and the City of Newcastle, a paddle wheeler, found a crevice in the rocks just south of Nobby's, so perfectly fitted to her shape, that she could not be dislodged. The gang plank was put out and the passengers walked ashore unharmed. Less fortunate was the cook of the Minni, which was lost on Cape Banks at the entrance to Botany Bay. He survived the actual stranding, but died of heart failure before the crew could be taken off.

(cont. page 17)

And so it goes, the story of the coasters with its humour and tragedy, service and hard work, tells of an important section of the State's development. With the impact of war in 1939 many of the ships were taken over by the Australian and American Navies and these vessels rendered great service in their new sphere of operation. In their absence freights were carried both by rail and the enormous expansion of road transport. Cars, tourist buses and aircraft catered for the passenger trade and these factors coupled with the shoaling of sand bars, and the slow turn around of ships due to waterfront industrial trouble, have brought about keen competition in rates and service. As a result of this there is no regular service operating on the South Coast, while in the North the Richmond, Clarence and Macleay Rivers, together with Coff's Harbour, are the only ports regularly in use by coasters. Consequently many of the small harbours and shallow river ports are falling into disuse.

Soon in many places summer no'easters will rustle the dry seaweed around decaying frameworks of forgotten bar Leads that once guided small ships safely in from the sea.

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