



SCOOP

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THE JETTY

The most magnificent event of the season, the completion of the jetty. (Not quite completed! Fending around the walers, power and water still to come.)

The jetty has been created out of the goodwill and effort of members of the Couta Boat Club and Sorrento Sailing Club. It is a wonderful achievement, the link between the boats and the clubhouse, and an important addition to boating facilities at the bottom end of the bay. It would seem timely to thank all those who have contributed their time and expertise to the project.

Tim Phillips has had the role of CEO right from the very start,

dealing with planning, obtaining necessary permits, organising materials, liaising with contractors, and hands on as Bruce Griffiths and Peter Hannah have been Tim's major supporters, always in the background to help when going got tough!

Greg Fink from Southern Peninsula Underwater Services provided a week of time and equipment, diving and setting the piles. Ian Unmack was an untiring daily helper, hands on and helping with contractors. Barry Dawes also gave time, advice and assistance with contractors. Fred Allen shot the line! Billy Macnamara made available the two working barges. George Kimpton was hands on helping to tow the piles, and also supplied the nuts and bolts. Marshall Baillieu made a donation. The timber was donated by a CBC member.

The net result? Actual cash cost of the jetty is approximately \$50,000, totally funded by the Couta Boat Club. Without the donations and unpaid assistance the cost is estimated to have been \$95,000, the commercial quote obtained was \$160,000.

This is a fantastic result and our thanks go to all those who have been involved in the project. Three cheers!



End of the season, the newly completed jetty sits serenely in the twilight of an autumn afternoon, a place for contemplation for one lucky soul.

LOGAN™



NEWS FROM THE FLEET IN W.A.!

Tony Fitz-Gibbon has kindly supplied this revelatory piece on the annual race around Rottnest Island. Sounds like an exceptional weekend in more ways than one. Read on and see. If this doesn't "whet the whistle" for a trip to the west then nothing will!

COUTAS IN THE WEST!

The fleet here continues to grow and with the recent addition of RIPPLE to our ranks - the future looks fantastic. An indication of this was recently reinforced when we conducted our fourth annual race around Rottnest Island during the weekend March 20-21.

A total of seven Coutas ventured out of the confines of the Swan river and headed over on the 11 mile run to Rottnest on a bleak looking Friday. They were: AJAX - Mick Ahern, HERO - Tony Unmack, MERLIN Geoff Ogden, KASEY - Julian Walter,



Start of the Rottnest Race.

SURPRISE - Craig Lovelady, WEEROONA - Pope, Cutbush, Farrell, CHRISTA - Fitz, Packer, Stokes.

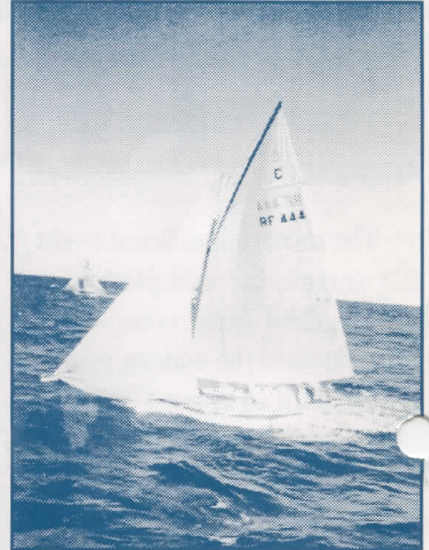
Unfortunately, RIPPLE - Patrick O'Hara and SHANNON - Gamble, Stirling, Sullivan were unable to make the trip. All efforts went unrewarded to get RIPPLE ready as she had only arrived on the truck a couple of weeks earlier and then had a bit of mast trouble on her maiden voyage here in the West but she has been out a few times since and now sports a somewhat familiar cream colour - looks gorgeous!

Leaving Freo around 11am we had a leisurely sail in 5-8knots for about an hour till what I think was the first rain of 1998 arrived. Well 'arrived' was a bit of an understatement. It fairly bucketed down for three or four hours drenching all the crews and their gear stowed forward.

The crew of SURPRISE hooked into a fine case of Leewin Estate Cab Sav to ward off the damp and arrived safe but emotional at Rotto. Fortunately the Couta Fleet here are blessed with a fine flotilla of large, make that very large power yachts that accompanied us this weekend. The smallest being Julian Walter's SPRAY - a simply magnificent classic Halvorsen 42 footer. Even Tim Phillips, who joined us for this weekend, was suitably impressed by the fact that when we all arrived wet and cold we had these large 'mother

ships' to shower and then indulge in a few Mt Gays before the evening BBQ.

After a fairly quiet Friday night in the Rotto pub...I say fairly as most of us were somewhat reserved as the forecast for Saturday was Fresh to Strong South Westerlies with a 2m swell and this did not herald for a comfortable sail around Rotto and in



Merlin enroute to Rottnest

particular the West End, Saturday morning arrived - the rain had cleared, the clouds hadn't and the wind was 8-12s. In the west a breeze like this would only be expected to freshen so the decision was taken by a brief meeting on the end of the pub jetty to stay on the north side of the island, go out to a marker boat and return. This was a wise decision. By the time we did get out there the swells were up but the wind stayed 12s rather than the forecast 18-25.

After starting in Thompson's Bay, AJAX & MERLIN led the fleet around the north of the island to the rounding mark - Tony Packer's 48' MANDALAY heaving and tossing in the swell complete with w/e Rose and their 4 week old boy - Robbie. (That's the way we are training Couta sailors for the next millenium!).

While the front two didn't change positions much at all - the middle of the fleet had a great time trying



Mark Lovelady and his crew from Surprise.



Hero passing Rotto's Bathurst Lighthouse.

different sets to get an edge here and there during the three and a half hour race back to Thompson's Bay. CHRISTA after being at the rear at the start worked her way into third, SURPRISE missed the "standoff" boat near the reefs and just missed the reefs, KASEY complete with the wisdom of Tim Phillips on board kept us looking over our shoulder the whole way, HERO and WEEROONA had a massive tussle when WEEROONA was a fair bit back but they clawed their way back on top right at the finish. Maybe Tony Unmack(HERO) - king of the crayfish and crabs had his mind on the post race snacks.

Well after we all arrived back safely we agreed that although this year we didn't actually go right around Rottneest we had all had a great sail and all the boats were in one piece. This may well happen again in the future as it's very safe and about the same distance so in no way did it detract from the day.

Post race was fabulous thanks mainly to Tony Unmack and Simon Farrell. Tony supplied the crabs and crayfish, Simon the 50' MV KATHLEEN and the Mt Gay & Tonic. Can you imagine the mess 50 Coua sailors and friends can make when they have an



Coua Boat fellowship Rotto style!

afternoon tea party with Mt Gays, crays & crabs? Not pretty but the fresh cray superb.

That evening a fairly 'full' group of nearly 60 wandered into the pub for the dinner and presentation of the magnificent new trophy kindly donated by Tim Phillips. The Wooden Boat Shop trophy was won by AJAX skippered by Mick Ahern - well done Mick. As the frivolity had started around 3.30 - 4pm, by 9 - 10pm we were a fairly happy group to say the least. The evening could not go on record without the highlight being recorded in this journal. The Rear Commodore of Sailing from Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club was a crew on SURPRISE, he attended

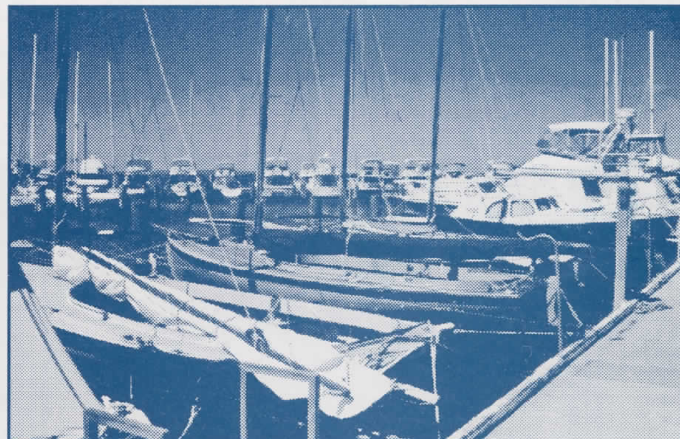
the dinner not in an official capacity but for fun and that's what he got. However he didn't expect a large cheesecake to explode and cover him in cheese, cream and strawberries. Straight out of the Three Stooges! Not a good look on a navy Freshie shirt. To this day the we are still trying to find out how a penny bomb found it's way into a cheesecake.



The perpetual trophy

With sore heads all round on Sunday morning we headed back to Freemantle in a 15k breeze on a broad reach home. Thank God we could do the 11 miles without a tack! Then of course we had to all queue at the cranes to drop our masts to come up the river. (tabernacles next year?)

This was another fantastic weekend of Coua sailing and unrivalled fun that will go on and get bigger and better each year. Hopefully sometime in the future



Coutas at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club

we can encourage the Vics to put a crew together and join us.

Tony Fitz-Gibbon

CHRISTA

Sore head.



Coua boats in the compound at Freemantle re-masting after the trip down the Swan River.

QUEENSLIFF REGATTA

THE WALTER TODD MEMORIAL TROPHY

The Walter Todd Memorial Trophy in the form of a cousta boat transom with main sheet traveller hause now hangs on the wall of the Club Lounge and is awarded for First on Handicap in the Annual Queenscliff Regatta.

Walter Todd and his family are legendary in cousta boat history. Walter was born in Queenscliff in 1864 in a fisherman's hut on the flats. His father was one of the first fishermen to arrive in Queenscliff and camp in the area to be known as the fishermen's flat.

Walter fished with his father until buying his own boat. It was at this time the Cousta Boat was developed. Most of the boats initially brought to Queenscliff would have been double ended net boats. It was through the experience of Walter and his fellow fishermen that the Queenscliff type cousta boat developed its distinctive shape.

Each of Walter's five sons went fishing - firstly as third hand on the lee side of the boat and each getting his own boat at age 21. Syd had the "Merriwee", Hec

knowledge to help with course laying.

Walter joined the Queenscliff Life Boat crew, serving 33 years as boatman and bowman retiring in 1918 for Hec to take his position. He attended many wrecks including the "George Roper", a four masted barque (1883), a tug which came to its salvage, but was itself wrecked, the "Cheviot", passenger steamer (1887), "Sierra Nevada", ship (1900), "Australia", steamer which hit Corsair Rock at 14.5 kts in 1904 and many others including the brig "Edward" (1912) and the steam whaler "Campbell" (1914).

It is sobering to remember the life boat at the time had no engine, but was crewed by fishermen who rowed out to the wrecks in the most treacherous conditions.

Following the rescue of all hands from the yacht "Grange" in 1887 the Commissioner of Trade and Customs paid the crew which included Ernest and Walter Todd 5 pounds each as a gratuity and the people of Ballarat raised a public subscription presenting each



the "Mischief", George (Jocka.) had the "Dawn". Many members will have seen the evocative photo of Dawn on the hard stand with Jocka aboard. Les had the "Doreen" and Dave the "Wattle".

Walter's grand children include Jack and Geoff Beazley, CBC members, often seen at Queenscliff regattas, more often than not lending a bit of local

with six sovereigns. Such gratuities and the fee for monthly practice would have been a welcome supplement to the income of a fisherman. Four of Walter's sons served on the life boats as did three grandsons - Keith, son of Syd, John and Geoff Beazley. For a time low fish prices forced Walter to look elsewhere. He sailed his boat "Alice Maud" to Portland

with William Dusting - only to find prices were no better. Not deterred they joined with Portland fisherman William Reynolds in loading the boat on a ship to South Australia - where they found lots of fish but no market. Todd sailed back to Portland, through, severe storm and thence to Queenscliff. The foray is reported in "The Sentinel".

As perhaps with all Cousta men fishing was in Walter's blood and racing was his recreation - provided it didn't interfere with the fishing.

It is reported that one New Year he fished with "Mister" Joe Wells at Queenscliff in the "Surprise" in the morning and sailed to San Remo for the New Year regatta the next day. But first in the morning out of San Remo they caught 45 boxes of Cousta, got back in time for the race which they duly won and sailed back to Queenscliff in time for fishing the next morning.

Was there any truth to the rumour the boys would sneak out at 2.00 am to splash water and seaweed over the jetty in the hope the old man would return saying don't get up - its too rough for fishing today?

Whilst Walter no doubt took his fishing seriously (he could not afford to do otherwise) racing was also a serious matter. It is said that after a close race against Jocka in Dawn in which Dawn sailed through the Wattle to take the gold watch Walter wouldn't talk to his son for days.

It was around this time that august clubs such as Royal Yacht Club of Victoria and others excluded fishermen from their regattas on the basis they were professional sailors. Port Melbourne Yacht Club was excluded because it had fishermen in its membership. It is no wonder fishing boat regattas became popular with their own communities.

Walter Todd was surely a Cousta man worthy of recognition by a perpetual trophy to be sailing for in the waters off Queenscliff.

Sources:

Garry Kerr's Craft and Craftsmen of Australia Fishing 1870 - 170 - Mains'l Books 1985
E T Raison "Queenscliff as a Fishing Port"
Queenscliff Historical Publications.

SAILING NEWS

SORRENTO HOTEL WINTER SERIES

If you haven't already entered and sailed a race, the CBC/SSC will be conducting the Sorrento Hotel Winter Series commencing on Saturday the 30th May, 1998. This series will comprise five (5) heats on consecutive Saturdays from Saturday 30th May 1998 and be held in the Camerons Bight area, with a scheduled start time of 1330. Races will be held around fixed marks, with the possibility of some Clubhouse starts and/or finishes. The bar will be open immediately after each race and prizes shall be awarded at this time.

The Sorrento Hotel is kindly donating a number of prizes, so come and take advantage of the new jetty facility and have a beer or two after the race. If you have not already received one, a Notice of Race and Entry Form is available from James Gibson, telephone BH 03 9701 3833, AH 0418 58 78 33.

SUNDAY JUNE 21, 1998 - 10.30 A.M

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - SORRENTO SAILING CLUB

An opportunity for you to have your say on matters relating to the Club.

FOR SALE

Mainsail - \$500
No. 1 Jib - \$300
Suit 26' Cousta Boat.
Phone James Gibson
BH 9701 3833
AH 0418 58 78 33

WANTED

"Cameraman" To operate club video camera on the water during the racing season 1998/9

Speak to Bruce Griffiths.

RACING RESULTS

LOGAN PORTSEA CUP

DIVISION ONE

Line Honors	C97	Jeff Richardson
Second over line	Kate	Adam Leeming
Handicap		
1st	Jessie	John Coates
2nd	Rebecca	Nick Williams
3rd	C97	Jeff Richardson

DIVISION TWO

Line Honors	Spitfire	Tony McNamara
Handicap		
1st	Spitfire	Tony McNamara
2nd	Kentdale	Bruce Bell
3rd	Elsie E	Harley

RESULTS QUEENSCLIFF REGATTA

Line Honors	C97	Jeff Richardson
Handicap		
1st	C97	Jeff Richardson
2nd	Cheviot	Jamie Gibson
3rd	Beau	Ross Wilson

“MERMERUS”

Easter Sunday, the day of the abandoned sternchaser. 30 knots from the north. David Bishop saw her, the Mermerus broken off her mooring wedged under the Coppin jetty.

A phone call to Jeff Richardson, another to Tim Phillips, and half an hour later saw the Mermerus safely at the launching ramp; she's now secure in the Wooden Boat Shop yard. Great work boys. (No sign of Tim time here!)

Coutas in the west evokes interesting memories of the couta boats on Port Phillip Bay. HERO, beautifully sailed by Arthur Meredith - Smith, but at her finest fully dressed in regatta rig, an outstanding sight. AJAX owned and built by Will Baillieu, so skillfully helmed by the late Tim Sutcliffe. WEEROONA, skippered by Ric Lansell in a drifter, being towed “Cleopatra” style by a bevy of nubile maidens, disqualified of course. SURPRISE sailed by the late Avant - Garde Ian Sturzaker, a great supporter of the Couta Boat Club. CHRISTA, sister ship to PHOENIX, originally sailed by Dick Whittaker, and KASEY sister ship to KATE, built for Mick Riley. RIPPLE launched for Tally Erlandsen in 1926, more recently restored and sailed by Robert Finkelstein. MERLIN, a new boat built for Geoff Ogden making her own history in W.A. SHANNON, a Victorian couta boat also at home in the west.

Thanks for the report Tony, the couta boats are obviously having a great time in W.A., Likewise their owners and crews.

Ed.

FOR SALE “GEM”

24' + (bowsprit) x 8'6" x 4'6".

Traditional South Australian bermudan sloop built 1939 of oregon & jarrah on spotted gum, similar to a couta boat but with coachhouse and deck. Oregon spars, spinnaker pole etc., all brass winches and portholes, 2 long berths (could be more), head. Much new or near new - main, deck canvas, rigging, outboard, boat cover, cabin & cockpit cushions. Cat. 7 safety. Raced successfully in Sydney twilight and veteran races.

Selling reluctantly to buy bigger boat. **\$11,900.**
02-9552 4162 B.H. 02-9555 1154 A.H.

SATURDAY JUNE 20, 1998 - 7 P.M.

SSC/CBC TROPHY PRESENTATION NIGHT

Finger food, supper provided. Drinks at bar prices.
\$10 adults, \$5 children (under 14)

JANET GIBSON (our hardworking controller of record books and trophies) requests that all PERPETUAL TROPHIES be brought along to the Presentation Night. Alternatively deliver them to her prior to the event at 105 Back Beach Road, Portsea, (5984 4080), or 1/4 Monaro Road, Kooyong (9822 9262). Thanks for your co-operation!

QUEENSCLIFF REGATTA



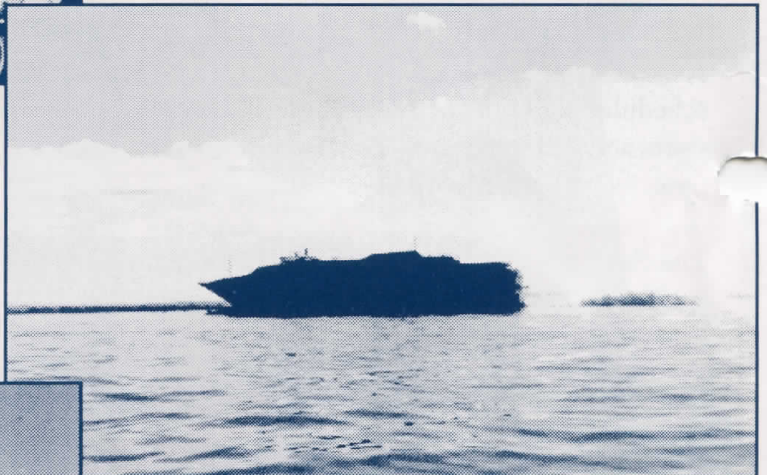
Above: A reef and number 3 headsail made for an exhilarating sail back from Queenscliff after the first attempt to stage the race.



Above: Waiting for a start at the second attempt.



Above: Still waiting, discussing weddings, parties, anything. Congratulations Bruce and Chris!



Above: The "Devil" flies through.



Left: The mixing of Divisions.

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