

Whitsunday's, September 2007.

Club Cruise Report By : Don & Jan (Waverider)



Don & Jan and Waverider left home on 15th September and travelled to Benalla where we met up with Paul & Rhonda Deipenau and Flame One, who were accompanied by their granddaughter Brooke. We spent 6 leisurely days travelling to Queensland with morning coffee breaks and having our main meal for the day at lunchtime. Doing considerable sightseeing in the towns we stopped in, we were still finished travelling for the day by mid afternoon.

Our 1st night was spent at the Lakeside Caravan Park in Findley, 2nd night at Spicer Caravan Park in Pareks, 3rd night at Big Sky Park in Narrabri, 4th night at Miles Caravan Park, 5th night at the Tropical Wanderer Resort at Rockhampton, 6th night at Andergrove Caravan Park at Mackay which left us with about 160km to do the next morning. We arrived at Airlie Beach at 10.40am.

After setting up the boats we launched and put our boats in the marina before taking the vehicles and trailers around to Marlin Marine where they were stored for our time on the water. We met Gary & Lynette Newling and Sue & Peter Denton from the NSW Whittley Club at the launching ramp and the group met up on Waverider the following night for Happy Hour with John & Christine Clark (Sydney Club Members from Melbourne) joining us later.

Monday 24th we all headed for Hamilton Island early because the wind was picking up. We waited in Gulnar Inlet until we could get our berths on the marina.



The Whittley Boats in the Hamilton Island Marina

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We had fantastic weather for the 2 weeks we were there. In the days to follow we went for trips to Whitehaven beach, Chalkies beach, Hook Island and around Hayman Island. The whole area is best described as mind blowing. We also spent time exploring Hamilton Island, which turned out to be a quite beautiful place but very expensive and the service was basically nonexistent.

Whilst on Hamilton Island we were lucky to meet up with Wayne Jennings the President of the Queensland Whittley Club and his wife Rhonda and we all had a most enjoyable evening chatting about the running of a Whittley Boat Club.

Paul & Rhonda chose to do day trips only, but the rest of us stayed overnight in various bays such as Nara Inlet and Dugong Inlet where we swam, snorkelled and had happy hour each day. After 10 days John & Christine along with Paul, Rhonda and Brooke headed for home. Paul took only 3 days to get home.



Two Victorian & two NSW boats rafted together in Nara Inlet and the water colour is real.



The famous Whitehaven Beach

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The remaining 3 boats headed south for Lindeman and Shaw Islands. Going south for some reason saw the introduction of the MARCH FLY. They were huge, but we all managed to fight them off and tried hard to reduce their number. Again each day swimming, snorkelling and happy hour was the go.

Our last day on Hamilton Island saw us going on a trip to Bait Reef on a charter boat for the day. The water was crystal clear and the reef magnificent. This just made our trip complete.



A large Wrasse fish at the back of the boat.

The next day we all headed back to Shute Harbour to collect our vehicles and trailers, pack up and wash the boats then start the trip back home.

Don & Jan took the long route back along the coast checking out the scenery and sightseeing plus researching the waterways with a view to going back sometime and putting the boat in and exploring the many magnificent rivers at a later date. It was a fantastic trip and we thank the NSW Club for organising the Cruise and Garry & Lynette, the Cruise leaders, who did a great job taking us around and showing us the area.

Don & Jan - Waverider