

15-16 Nov 2014. Snapper Fishing in Port Phillip Bay



Attendees

1. Erwin & (his brother) Peter Abbinga, *BLACK BETTY*
2. David Ladell & Karen Jenkins *ESPADAIR*
3. Peter Walters, navigator Tuppence. *MABEL 2*
4. Tony, Gemma Dickson. *G & T*
5. Jay Davis, *SERENITY*
6. John, Jane, Matilda, Fletcher Archibald. *ARCHIE (unofficial interim name)*
7. Wayne & Lee-Anne Carpenter, *LEEWAY*
8. Trevor & Naomi Mansfield, *WHITE POINTA*
9. Peter & Caroline Holyoake, *BLACK SHEEP*

Friday is often a great day to arrive early and set up for a weekend cruise, avoiding peak hour traffic, and sneaking an extra night into our weekend cruise. This weekend was a record for early arrivals, with the first 6x boats named as above all mooring on the Friday night.

Erwin and David settled in early, opting to drive and launch rather than tackle the higher winds and swell coming from Sandringham. Gem and Peter drove in tandem later in the afternoon, with Tony coming after work. Later in the afternoon to evening arrivals of the remaining crews included Karen and Jay, with the Archibald's just making it into their mooring by torchlight.

We all enjoyed a chat and shared a drink, settling in early for a 5.30am start to our Snapper Fishing. The sunset promised a great start to our day, with rich pinks across the horizon.

We all came prepared with a range of baits from plastics and new baits suggested by Angelo San Georgio at our AGM a month ago, as well as more standard baits and fish heads. The morning was absolutely beautiful as promised by the sunset, with clear skies and no wind. There was a slight chill to the air, but nothing we weren't already prepared for, so out we all went heading out to 16m depths a few kilometres or so offshore.

I must admit that Jay is our dark horse here, quietly bagging more fish than the rest of us combined, so well done on the Snapper and Flathead front!! Most of us caught something, but by late morning, most decided to head off for a run to Portsea.

Jay led the way, taking us to all the seal hang outs along the way, but first up Jay brilliantly chanced across a pod of dolphins that were playing just in front of Arthurs Seat. We circled South Channel Fort (where the first cannon ball was fired at the beginning of the second world war, aimed at a German ship trying to make a quick exit from our waters), and finally moored together inside Pope's Eye for lunch. This was an amazing experience, being within the bay, moored, and yet inside a tranquil haven and breeding sanctuary for Gannet's (larger than a sea gull, with a copper head, black striped eyes, and black tipped wings.. see the photo below).

South Channel Fort



Gannet



Popes Eye



The waters were starting to get a little rougher, so we all trekked back to Mount Martha to try our hand again in bagging some fish.

Menacing bands of weather were making their way steadily across from SA and were now only a short distance from Colac. So we all head in to our respective moorings for Happy Hour, with farewells to Caroline and Peter. We also chanced across Ben Andrews who owns a Cruisemaster 700 called Mickey Mouse, and joined us for a cruise a few years back... so nice to see you Ben.

Happy Hour was very timely, with a good hour of conversation before the pitter-patter of rain started, and didn't stop again till the morning. We all made a hasty retreat to our boats, packing up our chairs and food.

Melbourne copped up around 40mm's of rain, but not sure how we rated in comparison, but it was pretty wet and we had a fair idea of steady winds and a swell out in the Bay. So we all went into the Mount Martha Marina Café for breaky, where about 2 hours later, opted for an early departure.

Thank you to everyone that came along, helped others with launching and recovering, fish and have a good time, and thanks to Doug and the team at Mount Martha Harbour marina for making room for us for the 2x nights.