

## Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club

### Gippsland Lakes Cruise, Captains Cove Resort, Paynesville, July 2016

Well a big thank you to all who attended the July Gippsland Lakes Cruise 28/7 to 1/8/2016. It was just a crazy idea I had for a "Family and Friends" Whittley Boat Cruise weekend that would involve staying onshore in 3 bedroom apartments at the Captains Cove Resort on the Canals in Paynesville.

The idea was to allow members to invite friends and /or family to join them and experience the fun we all have on a Whittley Club Cruise. The intention was to plan day boating trips from Paynesville if the weather permitted, then return to Captains Cove and moor your boat, on your private jetty directly in front of your apartment each night, where you and your guests could relax warm and dry with all the comforts of home.



It was a brave move, at the end of April, to financially commit to apartment accommodation, then gain the commitment of family members and friends to join you, and tow your boat 4 hours for a weekend on the Gippsland Lakes at the end of July. The weather was always going to be the unknown, and so how lucky were we?



The Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club promotes boating all year round with a cruise scheduled in every month of the year! This presents a challenge for all of us to muster enthusiasm in the colder months to get the boat out and get on the water. So we were so excited to book 10x apartments, with 14x boats and 55x people participating over the two days cruises on the Saturday 30 & Sunday 31 July. We were equally excited about the exceptional window of sunny weather we jackpotted!!

### **The Crews who attended:**

1. Peter & Audrey Nicolopoulos in "Conkiki"
2. Tony & Di Marshall with their daughter Laura and boyfriend Aaron in "Serenity"
3. Rod & Brenda Lorden with son Hillary and wife Kylie in "Bay Cruiser".
4. Peter & Gail Miller with friends Sandro & Jenny in "Casper".
5. John & Joy Beckman invited friends Stephen and Laina, David & their son Kallan in "JB Squared".
6. Hong & An Ngo and sons Aaron and Hayden in "Mac II".
7. Gary & Lee Honeychurch invited friends Bob & Deb in "Lucky Us".
8. Wilco & Marisca Seinen with daughter, Cleo and son Eric in "Ruby Tuesday".
9. Paul & Marielle Van Pampus invited friends Martin and Jane in "Why Knot".
10. Peter & Caroline Holyoake with friends Simon and Julia in "Black Sheep".
11. Gemma & Tony Dickson invited friends Geoff & Sandra in "G&T".
12. Craig & Alana Wighton with their children Cody, Talia & Zac in "Sea-Ya".
13. John & Jane Archibald with their children Fletcher and Matilda in "Archie".
14. Rob & Miriam Law came along from their holiday house on Raymond Island in their new 2380.



Six of the 14 boats arrived in Paynesville on the Thursday night. As a result of heavy rain that had fallen earlier in the week, the "Slip road" boat ramp (that is only 500m from Captains Cove) was flooded. We all then had to launch from the Yacht Club boat ramp on The Esplanade. Archie, Ruby Tuesday and Serenity made the most of the

light winds and cruised over to Ocean Grange and around Lake Victoria, returning late in the afternoon to Captains Cove.



As the Crews arrived during Friday, they were greeted at the Yacht Club boat ramp by John Beckman, Lee and myself to assist launching with John directing each boat through McMillian Strait and into the canals to arrive at their own private jetty at Captains Cove.



On the Saturday morning all 14x boats took a cruise to Lakes Entrance. We crossed Lake King to the mouth of the Tambo River where all 14x boats regrouped for the run towards Shaving Point at Metung and into Bancroft Bay. The lakes were as calm and flat as the pool table in the Paynesville Pub. We travelled east along Reeves Channel then cruised past Fraser Island and Barrier Landing before crossing the entrance into Cunninghame Arm past many fishing trawlers to moor on the floating pontoon jetties in Lakes Entrance.



After a coffee and a chat, we pushed off at about 12.30 pm and were up on the plane, all the way back down Reeves Channel to Metung where we all managed to get onto the jetty by about 1:15pm. A late lunch and a look around before we headed back around Shaving Point and headed west along Lake Victoria back to Paynesville and happy hour on the balconies.



It was then off to the “Old Paynesville Pub” for dinner. I must thank Simon Kiss, the manager of the Paynesville Pub, for the looking after us with a special discounted menu for our group and the offer of the courtesy bus to transport us to and from the pub.



The Sunday morning some awoke to the sound of heavy rain at about 7:00am. This did not dampen our spirit, and we all managed to get cars packed, trailers hooked on and parked at the Slip road boat ramp ready for retrieval at 1:00pm.



As we left Captains Cove at 9:00am we were a group of 11 boats, as Rob Law, and Archie had to head home and Mac II had commitments to drive to Metung. We saw dolphins and seals as we left the 5 knot zone at south end of McMillian Strait. Lake Victoria, again was extremely calm allowing us all to get up on the plane as we rounded Bluff Head on our way around into Duck Arm.



Ruby Tuesday left the group to do some more trawling, as the rest of the group headed to the Aurora Channel down to Ocean Grange jetty. We all enjoyed a walk on the 90 Mile Beach before returning to the boats for morning tea. With a planned retrieval time of 1:00pm, we left Ocean Grange at midday and motored down a short distance into Bunga Arm before making a U-turn and travelling out the Streamer Channel to head back towards Paynesville.





Unfortunately Serenity had a small overheating alarm, and so travelled home in limp mode from Aurora Channel to Paynesville.

Over our weekend stay, we managed to see a good view of what the Gippsland Lakes has to offer, and have some fun in Paynesville. No doubt everyone now has wet their appetite to discover more of the treasures this area has to offer!

I would like to thank Tamara, the manager at Captains Cove for her help and assistance in getting us all very comfortably accommodated at the resort. I would also like to thank everyone who came along for the weekend. It was fantastic to have many new faces on a cruise. I hope that all of your friends and family enjoyed the experience of a Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club weekend on the Gippsland Lakes. I do have to thank the weather Gods for turning on such a fantastic calm, dry, weekend. How lucky were we!!!

See you all on the next cruise.

Gary & Lee Honeychurch