



Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club

Eildon Trip - 10 -14 June 2016

- Mike & Monica Jones – *IMPULSE*
- Peter Walters with Tuppence – *MABEL II*
- Gemma & Tony Dickson – *G&T*
- Jay Davis & Leanne Powel – *SERENITY*
- Renato & Domenica Greco – *THE BOSS*
- Marielle & Paul Van Pampus – *WHY KNOT*

Ironically, with recent flooding rains up the NSW coast and in Tasmania, the Murray River was simply too low upstream of Echuca, so our cruise was relocated to Eildon at the eleventh hour!

Friday saw 5 of the 6 crews arrive, with 3 already launched and keen to start the weekend. Mike and Monica were first on deck, with a mooring spot ready to welcome all the arrivals. Peter Walters and G & T were launched and ready by 4.30pm, so we bunkered down for the night. Renato and Domenica, then Jay & Leanne arrived later that evening, but launched bright and early Saturday morning.

We were ready to head off to Big River, when we checked to find the BOM weather map showing imminent rain, so we found a protected spot nearby and bunkered down as quickly as we could. The rain hit as we were mooring, and thankfully it wasn't too heavy. So we took the opportunity to enjoy a coffee and a relaxing catch up on each other's boats.

G&T was the only boat so far without an awning, so this restricted some movement, especially when cooking, but all in all, the weather wasn't bad at all. Some were using safety heaters, and others an upturned clay flowerpot on the Metho cooker. Both were effective in deflecting any winter chills.

Saturday afternoon lazed on quietly as we chatted on, and with one thing and another, we decided to stay here the night. Unfortunately this venue was too steep for a camp fire, and a bit muddy, but we were determined to rectify this for Saturday night.

Gemma and Peter Walters headed out after 9am on Sunday in *Mabel II* to check what the eta was for Paul and Marielle, and with a noon timeline, we headed back into camp for a coffee.

The others were keen to get going, so they headed off and met up with us later. So Peter W, Paul & Marielle and G&T all trekked off in search of a camp ground up Big River. We made it as far as the Taylors Bay Camp ground, but found it just a bit too shallow for us, so came back a bend or two in the river.

There were plenty of fisherman about in little tinnies and run-about, and still a few foreshore camping sites with fires lit for warmth. As the day was coming to a close though, the others



caught up with us, and told us of their exciting adventure visiting friends of Renato & Domenica's in a well kitted up houseboat! I believe for about an hour, they were wooed by a coffee machine, the warmth and space, but then came to their senses and found us!

By then, we had a fabulous fire going, and the beginnings of Happy Hour. With such fabulous timber around, we were kept quite toasty circled around the fire, while being well rugged up!

We were aware of the forecast for snow on the nearby hills, but with clear skies, and a fabulous view of the stars and aircraft, we knew to expect fogs overnight. In the morning, this was quite spectacular, and hopefully someone took some photos for our website! It was so pretty.

For some though, the weekend was nearly over, and farewells were said to The Boss and Serenity. Not too long later, we trekked off, only to also farewell Impulse. So G&T, Mabel II and Why Knot headed off up to The Pines, near the normal club campsite. It seemed protected and had the warmth of the afternoon sun warming it, so we pulled in!

Here Gemma and Marielle enjoyed playing their ukuleles and singing a few songs. Tony was trying to connect his Telstra sim card without success, and finally we had to say our farewells to Paul and Marielle. Pete, Gem & Tony sat and enjoyed the last of the sun, enjoying a drink or two. Once gone, the cold crept into the air pretty quickly, so we bunkered down for the night, had dinner and watched a film.

The morning was very crisp, and was a thick pea soup fog!! So at 9.30am we pulled out and used our snail trail to trek back towards Jerusalem Creek. By the time we had reached the island near Eildon Marina, the fog had lifted enough to enjoy one final race down the main arm to clear out the engines! Lovely!!!

We pulled out ok and were ready to head home, with a sound reminder to always check your trailer after leaving it anywhere overnight.

Someone had tampered with G&T's trailer. They had released the tow-ball locking mechanism, and had reinserted the split pin. If Gem hadn't actually double checked this, there could have been serious consequences on the return journey. So watch out particularly at Jerusalem Creek Public Boat ramp.... this is not the first time we know that the exact same thing had occurred to someone travelling in our group!!!

Once we returned home, we reported this to the Eildon police who said that items had also been stolen from vehicles there too. So watch out, do a safety check of your trailer and car set up, **padlock what you can**, and keep any valuables with you, and not on your car or trailer!

All in all though, a lovely winter cruise, with a terrific bunch of Whittleby owners, on our beloved Lake Eildon.

Written by Gemma Dickson.