

MWCC Easter 2016 Trip Report

Hawkesbury River, 2016

From the Whittley Family

A big congratulations to the Whittley Club NSW organising committee of the 2016 National Whittley Regatta at Akuna Bay, on The Hawkesbury.

Neville grew up travelling to The Hawkesbury with a Whittley Voyager and Valiant car. Nev's mum Aileen Whittley, still remembers one year when traveling in a convoy of Whittleys, one customer filled their water tank with fuel! It's safe to say, no such mishaps happened on the 2016 National Regatta.

A great level of organisation and attention to detail ensured everyone enjoyed each aspect of the trip immensely. Even the 'show bag' of the trip had some terrific and useful and gratefully received surprises. Congratulations to Janine from Aquapower for organising such a good quality cool bag and 'glasses'. The book about the Hawkesbury was well worth the read as well.

Many thanks to all the supporters of the trip, namely, Raymarine, Hunts Marine, Volvo Penta and Aquapower Marine.



Sydney-siders are particularly fortunate to have such a wonderful waterway so close to their capital city. The Hawkesbury is certainly a repeat destination for many years. It is such a novelty for 'us Mexicans' to have a boat coming around selling coffee and ice creams.

Maxine and Ray Mantle did an outstanding job 'pulling it all together' along with their committee helpers, many thanks for all your efforts over the last 2 years. And Maxine's organising did not stop there, with about 16 boats going from Akuna Bay direct to Roseville Bay (what a picturesque National Park with good boat launching facilities) to launch for a couple of days on Sydney Harbour.

We rafted up for one night, and what a lot of fun that was, with so many laughs and good memories. Then off to Cockle Bay Marina, in Darling Harbour, it was all just fantastic! Walking distance to China Town for dinner and we took the light rail the next day to Sydney Fish Market. It was with regret that we all had to head home after so many days of great boating experiences.



Many thanks again to Maxine and Ray Mantle and committee members, for the memories that we all now have of The Hawkesbury. The local knowledge of the team leaders and "tail end Charlies" was just fantastic— MANY THANKS GUYS!

Wishing you many happy Whittley boating times together.

Written by Marianne Whittley *(for the Whittley Marine Group)*.

From Marielle and Paul Van Pampus

What a fantastic time we had at the NSW Hawkesbury Regatta. We launched our little Voyager "Why Knot" at Apple Tree Bay on the Tuesday before the Regatta. We wanted to explore the beautiful Hawkesbury whilst it was still calm before the Easter break.

Our first night we found a public swing mooring at Castle Bay where we met up with Maxine and Ray Mantle. They made us feel very welcome.

Thursday afternoon Ray guided us to our berth for the next 4 days at Akuna Bay. We picked up our show bag with lots of goodies and met up with our fellow skippers. A great BBQ night was hosted by the NSW Whittley Club.

The next few days we were split in separate groups to explore the great waterways under the guidance of a NSW leader. This was our first Regatta and we were most impressed with the whole organisation. Starting with the professional printed paperwork, the show bags with goodies, the meal arrangements, the facilities at the Marina and everything else I missed mentioning.



Thank you very much NSW Club. You certainly set a very high standard! Paul and Mariëlle.



From Gail Miller

Peter and I arrived with Casper in tow into Akuna Bay marina national park, Thursday afternoon. What a spectacular site!

Our meet and greet of everyone was terrific, lots of fun and laughs and plenty of drinks flowing!!!!

The next four touring days of the Hawksbury and surrounds were amazing. We were in the green team, which we nick named the dream team by the end!!! Our tours of Cowan creek, Refuge bay and Pittwater were so much fun.



Rafting up and swimming, hoping no bull sharks were hungry. Also heading into Sydney via Manly and a little detour out the Heads and back.



Berthing in darling harbour was a highlight. 15 Whitley boats in a row, Wow!!

Fun had by all, thanks N S W.

Cheers Gail and Peter



From Gemma Dickson

This was a trip we had planned to do for many years, so we were so excited when the day actually came to trek off. In convoy with Jay Davis and Leanne Powell with Serenity, Mike and Monica Jones with Impulse, and Renato and Domenica Greco with The Boss... A total of 3x Cruisemaster 700's and one 2800, ready to take on three adventures within 2 weeks!



We were all lucky enough to get some extra days off before the cruise, so we all headed straight for Lake Macquarie for a few days early adventuring. We were met by Gary and Lynette Newling and their Cruisemaster 700 "Signed on 4....2", generously showing us around. Funny that with such terrible weather forecasts, we were just so lucky to only see a few short showers! We had a gorgeous time, and recommend the journey for you next time you can plan to launch there!



On Thursday the big move came from Marmong Point Marina where we left our vehicles, to the Regatta launch venue of Apple Tree Bay. All went smoothly except for one trailer bearing giving G&T's trailer some grief, but with spares and much preparation, the issue was quickly addressed.

We had met up with Cindy and Mark from Qld with their Cruiser 660 at a petrol station on the way down, and with several boats launched ready to head off to Akuna Bay Marina, we followed Narelle and Gary Baglin in 'The Palace'. It was also lovely to be met by Tony & Di Marshall... while visiting old haunts, and touring around venues of their courtship days.

There was a gentle breeze, and tantalising views of rocks and trees that were impossibly emerging from nowhere along the shoreline and rocky outcrops, and houses with views to only dream of.... Only thing is, we don't need to dream, as we can just anchor off and enjoy any view we wanted!

Akuna Bay Marina was fabulous with every luxury we could ask for, including a laundry to start the regatta with clean clothes! Happy hour and the sausage sizzle was a huge success, with many new and old faces to snatch a few moments to catch up with. We had a large group from Queensland, NSW and Victoria, around 42 boats in all. It was a lovely way to open the Regatta.

Friday morning saw the start of the 3x adventures, which was rotated around 6x different groups, ensuring safe river traffic. I was interested to learn that the NSW club had to seek a special permit to allow so many of us on the Hawkesbury River at the one time, to ensure we all “towed the line” so to speak. If only all boats on the river did the same as we tried to do!



The first cruise for our Dark Blue group was the Middle Hawkesbury, heading off under the famous Mooney Mooney M1 Motorway bridges, and up as far as the Berowra Creek. The waters were green, the hillsides picturesque, and the houses magically hiding within them. We passed boats that had seen better days, some semi-submerged, and others both enormous and luxurious, and others overtaking and swamping us with their wake! I was particularly taken by this area, and loved the secret hideaways within such a busy city, with properties that were only accessible by sea and water.

Day two was also fabulous, adventuring around the local area of Cowan Creek, and the many inlets surrounded by the Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park. We found a quiet haven that had many yachts and cruisers already moored in it, but had enough room for us to anchor off. Many of us swam, sipped a quiet ale or two, and enjoyed our lunch. On this tour we also sighted the yacht used in the Nicole Kidman and Sam Neill film “Dead Calm”. Having being a luxury million dollar yacht 30 years ago, we were horrified by its state of disrepair.



Interesting to also look at poor Nicole.... she looked better then too! Far more natural in my thoughts!!

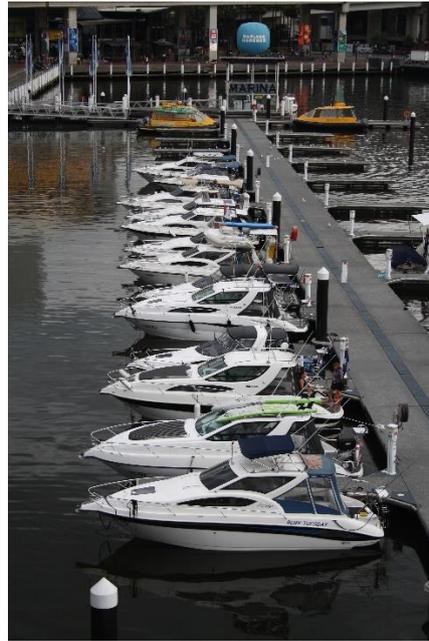


Our final cruise adventure was on the Easter Sunday (and thank you for the surprise chocolate egg deliveries!!) to Pittwater, where the “Home and Away” beach site was, and the many heavily populated marinas and larger vessels. We saw Refuge Bay, America Bay, and many little inlets tucked into the coastline. This really was an eye opener, and we finally found a quiet haven to drop anchor and enjoy some lunch and a swim. The weather was turning a little though, and the journey was finally made to return back to the marina.

Sunday was our last night of the Regatta, and the big upstairs dinner! Lots of speeches and thankyou’s were made, and some fun dancing. Monday came all too quickly though, and we all made our own way out of the marina across the next day or two. Some had to pull out quickly and head home, and others had more plans to adventure on.

We were part of the group heading into the Sydney Harbour, and this was enormous fun. With around 16x boats, this was quite some exercise in finding our way into town, and launching at Killarney Height’s boat ramp in the Roseville area. We launched and rafted up just in time in Sugarloaf Bay, with the heavens opening up as the last boats tied off. We had 16 boats in 2x lines of 8, back to back so we could all talk. The rain came down, but with Happy hour and a rest, we all enjoyed lots of chatter and entertainment from the group, including Stuart’s daring leap from his boat to ours!





We took our time to relax on day one here, finding a quiet bay near Manly Cove to moor up and swim. Many tried their skills on the paddle boards again, and others snorkelled, swam to shore and relaxed.

After this, Jay led us all out into the open swell for the fun of it, and we all surfed it back in which was a real hoot. We then followed each other in passed Kirribilli House, the Opera House, and under the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It was incredible how fast and furiously the ferries zoomed past, with us having to abide by 5 knot restrictions, to be swamped in their wake! But we made it through and were greeted by Maxine and Ray Mantle, Di and Tony Marshall and Gary and Narelle Baglin to settle into our moorings at Darling Harbour's Cockle Bay Marina. Wow was this exciting!

Some of us stayed one night, other two, with dinners out, shopping for others, and an adventure in the Maritime Museum for others. This was just fabulous, but the bush is for Tony & I, and so our last night was rafting up with Jay and Leanne back in Sugarloaf Bay. What a fabulous adventure! We loved this, and thank everyone who helped make it possible!

Written by Gemma Dickson.

From Gary Honeychurch

Three boats – “JB Squared”, “Ruby Tuesday” and “Lucky Us” set off from Gippsland on a road trip north to attend the 2016 NSW Whittleby Regatta. We were all excited as we couldn’t wait to explore the beautiful Hawkesbury River. We stayed overnight in Gundagai and arrived at the beautiful Akuna Bay Marina mid-afternoon on Wednesday 23 March. The friendly Marina staff had told us to launch there as we were early and there was plenty of parking spaces. Our boats were in the water and safely moored in their marina berths before sunset. Maxine and Ray Mantle were there to greet us, hand us our “show bags” and make sure we settled in. Our show bags contained a lot of great stuff – Regatta team t-shirts, list of boat and crew names, Hawkesbury River map and Hawksbury River Cruising Guide book to name but a few things.

Thursday morning we awoke to a very foggy Marina that didn’t take long to clear to a warm sunny day. We decided to set out to explore the Cowan Creek area to give the boats a run before the Regatta. The scenery was beautiful and the weather warm and sunny. We picked up a public mooring in Waratah Bay where we enjoyed cooking lunch and a refreshing swim. In the late afternoon we headed back to the Marina to meet the rest of the Regatta Crews over a sausage sizzle. Most crews had arrived and the sausage sizzle provided a great opportunity to catch up with fellow Victorian Whittleby Club members and old friends from the 2014 Murray River Regatta.

Akuna Bay Marina was excellent. Great shower facilities, fantastic café that served a delicious breakfast, good coffee and hot chocolate, boat repair shops, boat detailing, etc. The Marina could accommodate approximately 400 boats in wet and dry storage. Some of the boats had to be seen to be believed!! Our 2380 Whittleby looked like it was a tender to some of the bigger boats!! The NSW Regatta Committee did a wonderful job in accommodating the 42 boats on the Regatta and where possible had everybody moored with others that were in their team. What a great way to meet your fellow team members. We were divided up into 6 groups with an assigned team leader. The NSW Regatta Committee had selected three areas to explore around the Hawkesbury River and two teams would head out to a different location each day.

“Lucky Us” was in the Dark Green Team with Angela Munz as our team leader. On Good Friday we headed out to explore the Cowan Creek area with Happy Dayse (Angela & Alex Munz, NSW), The Boss (Renato & Domenica Greco, Victoria), LeeWay (Lee-Anne and Wayne Carpenter, Victoria), Super Fun (David & Judith Robertson, Qld), James D (Sue & Peter Denton, NSW), We were joined on all days by the Light Green team who were led by Michael Filacouridis and Phil Sparks on Marie Christine.

We slowly cruised down to Bobbin Head which was as far as we could go with our boats. Angela provide great commentary along the way with a lot of interesting historical information. We went back into Smiths Creek and went to the very end of the arm called Spirit Cove, passing some big boats along the way. We found a beautiful place to raft up where we had lunch. The water toys (inflatable stand up paddle boards) all came out to play and some of us enjoyed a quiet swim. After lunch we headed up Cowan Creek past Halletts Beach and the extremely popular Refuge Bay. Refuge Bay was very crowded and looked like a Coles Car Park for boats. We went over to the quieter Jerusalem Bay where we anchored and enjoyed an afternoon swim before heading back to Akuna Bay. Our dinner was a delicious serving of either fish and chips or calamari and chips served at the Marina Café. Simon from Aqua Power Marine surprised all boat crews with a lovely gift – a soft esky, Volvo hat, floating

key rings, great Volvo Penta scotch glasses and some other great information on Volvo marine products. The scotch glasses were well used each night for a night cap on "Lucky Us" – Thanks Simon!!

Easter Saturday arrived and The Green Team were off to explore the beautiful Pittwater. The weather was perfect for boating – blue sky, warm and the wind was gentle. We headed around West Head where the water was relatively calm. We enjoyed a very informative tour around Pittwater and then rafted up in Towlers Bay for 3 hours to enjoy the superb weather. Everybody got in for a swim and lots of people mastered the inflatable stand up paddle boards. Back at the Marina we enjoyed a Cocktail Night at the Marina Café.

Easter Sunday saw us head out to explore the Hawkesbury River itself. We went past Brooklyn and Dangar Island and headed under the Pacific Highway Bridge and Railway Bridge to get to the Hawkesbury River. The river is very wide and the tall cliffs along the way were spectacular. We headed to Spencer where we tried to locate the boat from the Dead Calm movie starring Nicole Kidman. Unfortunately we didn't find it but we had fun exploring Mangrove Creek which was a great place to anchor for lunch.

On our way back to the Marina we had lots of excitement to finish off the Regatta:

1. Casper (Peter & Gail Miller) had a "fuel emergency" where they nearly ran out of fuel – that last half of the fuel gauge goes really quickly doesn't it Peter! A big thank you to Mabel 2 (Best Tail End Charlie and International Rescue) who just happened to have spare fuel on his boat. A mid water exchange was made and Caspar was back with the Green Team.
2. Whilst the petrol exchange was happening a distress call was heard from "Marie Christine" – Someone had been bitten "on the thing" by a bee. They were asked to repeat and it was "a bee had bitten Michael on the rear!!" A further clarification came over the radio to say "ear" not "rear". Everybody had a laugh at Michael's expense. We are pleased to say Michael survived his bee sting and his EAR was okay.
3. After this we headed back to the Marina. Over the radio "This is Long Shot 2 – I have lost my favourite hat and I am turning around to find it" Yes Simon Teitge had lost his last Volvo hat!! He had given away 42 hats on Good Friday evening and didn't know where he would find another one. Mabel 2 turned around to support Simon who amazingly managed to pluck his hat out of the Hawkesbury River!! Great rescue Simon!!

Back at the Marina we all got changed into our best party gear to enjoy our farewell dinner at the Marina Restaurant. There was more raffles where a number of lucky Victorian Club members won! There was some good moves on the dance floor and a few drinks shared with new friends.

What a great job the NSW Regatta Committee did in arranging the 2016 Easter Regatta. A big thank you to the organising committee and everybody who participated. It was a wonderful event. Queensland have a hard act to follow in organising the 2018 Easter Regatta.

Written by Gary Honeychurch.