

The Melbourne Whittleby Cruiser Club



Lake Eildon Cruise – 27th December until 5th January, 2018

Attendees

Peter Walters & Tuppence	Mable 2
Gemma & Tony Dickson	G&T
Stuart, Annette, Lachie & Ethan Malone	Zero Tolerance
Friends – Brendan & Lynda	
Erwin Abbinga & David Becroft	Black Betty

Just like we have for many years, we headed off to Eildon on Dec 28th. G&T and Mabel 2 met at Wallan to travel in convoy aiming for a pre-noon launch. It was a terrific day on the roads with no issues with traffic or trailers, arriving and launching at Jerusalem Creek public boat ramp easily. We parked the cars and trailers and set off to find a camp for the night. Amazingly for the first year ever, house boats were out in force, claiming all our favourite spots. So our new internet camp ground had 3 houseboats in it, Woodbridge Point had one boat right where we like to camp and our spot behind the little Island on the Delatite was gone too. So we headed further up opposite the pines and set up for planned rains that were expected.

We swam, had lunch and slept and then suddenly the storm hit with an almighty force. The wind that whipped up could only be described as extreme, ripping something off one of our boats that was white which landed in the water about 30 metres behind us. We watched it sink while we tried to make out what we had lost. After about 5 minutes, having been satisfied that our lines were secure, we realised that the white item was not off Mabel 2, but off G&T's windscreen. It was our block-out, lost on day one of our summer trip!! Geepers, let's hope there are no 40+ degree days!!!

The rain set in for a while, but with a much needed sleep, we waited till morning to see if the blackout was anywhere in sight. Sadly, another item had disappeared into the depths of Lake Eildon. Tony even geared up with his goggles and snorkel, but given the water had visibility of about half a metre, it was not safe to pursue our blackout.

The second day at Eildon was lovely, and again we enjoyed early happy hours, a snooze and we found a new camp ground, hoping for a bit more protection. We tied up in a smaller opening, which was lovely and private. Rain hit early though, and it continued to rain and rain and rain until Pete had several leaks, as did G&T. We watched a few films this night, between assessing water ingress points and potential damage. At least the boat was now as clean as a whistle!

In the morning, the weather improved, but the wind was pushing the waves up under our marlin/duck boards and slapping over it. So before another night of this, we headed off only to find the most awesome mooring spot we called "Olive Grove" up in the Ford Inlet.

Days went by gently where we enjoyed many stunning days in perfect conditions to swim, star watch and walk the dogs. Stuart, Annette, Ethan and friends Brendan and Lynda armed with a terrific tent, arrived. Lachie was working, so he was to be picked up the next day. It was lovely to see them again, and we enjoyed lots of swims and happy hours!



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The next day Annette and Gemma headed back to Shepparton to pick up a few things including picking up Lachie. It was a warm and pleasant day, having lunch at the shopping centre. We made it back to Bonnie Doon in good time loaded up with a few more stocks, meeting Stuart, Ethan and Brendan.

New Year's Eve was lovely with us all lasting till after midnight. No fireworks or anything though... just fine company and a relaxed evening.

I'm not sure what day it was, maybe Jan 1st, where we did a trip down Big River and rafted up for a late lunch. There was the three boats, Mabel 2, Zero Tolerance and G&T. When we were organising Pete to raft up to Zero Tolerance, there was a funny hissing noise. We thought there was something odd happening and we all looked around to check out the source of the noise. Hilarious, as just when we were looking around, Pete's Pfd blew up!!! Pop and he was hugged by a bright yellow floatation device!! Not sure what happened or how, but we were all glad nothing major went wrong, as there was a breeze and we were taking great care to keep down wind of the tree we were moored to!

We had a bite of lunch and a few swims and watched as a Quintrex motored up to say hello. They said we looked fabulous rafted up together and took a few photos I think and we started to explain who we were. It was then that they explained they already knew we were from the club, as they had Steve Whittleby on board. What a surprise... lovely to say hello and a hoot to see him on a tender (that wasn't a Whittleby) from the nearby house boats!! Funny!!

On the 2nd of Jan, Erwin and his friend David Becroft arrived in Black Betty which was great fun. They did more adventuring, fishing, swimming etc. Erwin's friend had to leave before Erwin, so for his last night we headed back to Woodbridge Point that thankfully was now empty. We gathered some firewood and had a fabulous night star gazing and sipping a few beers and wines.



We made it to the Bonnie Doon pub for lunch which is always great. It was pretty warm and sadly Pete had some damage to his propeller from out the front, but otherwise it was a lovely outing.

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The Christmas holiday on our Whittleby at Eildon is always so special, but over way too quickly! Erwin, Pete and Gem & Tony all pulled out on the same day, though Erwin was able to stay on an hour longer, given he was pulling out at Bonnie Doon. G&T and Mabel 2 enjoyed a last cruise down to Jerusalem Creek where we pulled out without any issues. We met Erwin at Yea having bought him some lunch and travelled in convoy until our different exits on the Ring Rd.

Living the Dream with our Whittleby Cruisers!!

Written by Gemma Dickson from G&T