

# Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club Inc.



## Port of Sale to Lakes Entrance Labour Day Weekend Cruise 2018

*The Port of Sale is located at the northern end of the man-made canal, which has historically provided shipping and pleasure boats with excellent access into the heart of the township. It connects into a network of natural waterways and the Gippsland Lakes - in effect connecting Sale to Lakes Entrance by water - [centralgippsland.com.au/sale/attractions/item/port-of-sale](http://centralgippsland.com.au/sale/attractions/item/port-of-sale)*

### MWCC Cruise Participants:

- Lucky Us – Gary and Lee
- Full of Beans – Nigel and Ann
- Dong – Richard and Miao
- Serenity – Tony and Di
- Ruby Tuesday – Wilco, Marisca and Eric
- Jedda – Peter and Tania
- Gottago – Mark and Eva
- JB Squared – John, Joy and Mocha
- Mahalo – Laurie and Dael

**Cruise Length:** 93 kilometres = 1 canal, 2 rivers, 3 lakes, 1 strait and a creek.

With the promise of good weather for the weekend our eager group began to assemble in the carpark of the Port of Sale on the Friday afternoon of the recent Labour Day weekend. Nine boats gathered and were ready for launching to take up positions on the available piers, jetties and canal banks in and around the port. Once all the boats were tied and secured the group set off on foot for a leisurely walk to the Star Hotel for dinner and drinks which from all accounts was quite enjoyable, after dinner some of the group found themselves at the Wedge Performing Arts Centre bar for a night cap and some impromptu singing to the excellent live piano music in the bar.



Figure 2 -Port of Sale



Figure 1 -The Canal

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The next morning after a shopping run for last minute supplies, amenities trips and of course coffee hits (no coffee for 3 days is apparently too much to handle for some) it was time to make wake for our first port of call which would be the Lake Wellington Yacht Club at Marlay Point via the canal and the Thomson and Latrobe rivers. So with Lucky Us in the lead and JB Sq. as the tail end charlie we set off down the canal which opened in the 1890's and is more than 2 kilometres in length between the PoS and the Thomson river, it was excavated using only hand tools and horse and cart, it took 100 men three years to dig and was created to transport goods such as gold, wool, cheese and beer all moved by boat to and from the district on the canal. Along the way we travelled through farmlands and wildlife parks and passed under the historical centre pivot swing bridge which is the last of its type in the world still operational. Occasionally throughout the river system we had to slow and lift our drives to avoid contact with fallen debris. Lake Wellington was a welcome relief from the slow travel down the canal and rivers and in no time at all we were anchoring in the bay at the Marley Point for lunch on our boats and some folk even had time for a refreshing swim.



Figure 6 - The Swing Bridge



Figure 5 - Marley Point

After lunch we motored across Lake Wellington to the McLennan Straits to an area at the top end of the straits called Plover Point where we were able to secure enough sandy beach to have all of the boats side by side for an overnight stay and to watch the famous Marlay Point to Paynesville overnight yacht race for trailer sailor yachts.



Figure 4 - Plover Point

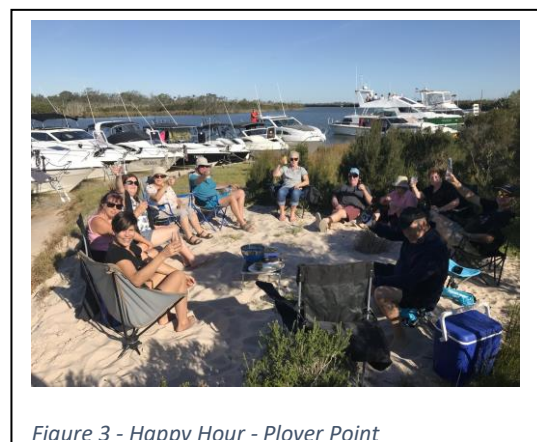


Figure 3 - Happy Hour - Plover Point

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Once we had settled in we all went ashore and set up for a cheese platter session on the beach before dinner and then wait for the race yachts to start gliding past, the race commenced at 2015hrs at Marlay Point some 10 klms away and we had to wait approx. 2hrs for the first boat to come through, with very light winds the racers would have been very thankful for an rushing outgoing tide, none the less it was quite a spectacular sight to see.



*Figure 7 -Malay Point Yacht Race - Midnight at Dover Point*

Our next part of the journey would take us to Metung via Paynesville and with the threat of late afternoon winds of up to 40knts forecast for the waters around Paynesville we headed off early through the straits and out into Lake Victoria and even had some time for a photo and video shoot (should make for fantastic viewing) thanks to Wilco for assisting Peter and Tania who shot the footage with some fine boat driving skills. Sadly, after all the excitement and being on a high from the photo session we heard over our radios that Full of Beans was experiencing some problems, it was decided Serenity and JB Sq. would wait and offer assistance while the rest of the crews would push on to Paynesville via Sperm Whale Head to try and stay ahead of the winds. Full of Beans was assisted to Paynesville with help from the Volunteer Coast Guard service and made safe with berthing, we should all be very grateful of the service the Coast Guard provide when called on to assist in these types of situations, also a big thank you to Tony and Di on Serenity and John and Joy on JB Sq. for giving assistance to Nigel and Ann on Full of Beans.



*Figure 8 - Boxes Creek Monday morning*

The rest of the boats steamed on towards Metung across Lake King dodging and weaving through the small sail boat racers who were enjoying flying off the tops of the white caps due to the increasing wind speeds, we all arrived at Boxes Creek on the south side of Bancroft Bay without any further troubles and again arrived just ahead of the many boats seeking overnight refuge in a protected cove, Boxes Creek is

tucked out of the wind and whilst Bancroft Bay was experiencing very high winds as evidenced by the tree tops on the surrounding hills we were either sitting on our boats having a wine and eating

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Figure 9- Boxes creek - with 41Km/hr winds from the south

cheese or swimming in the lagoon whilst moored up on the beach in a virtual millpond - smart move Commodore.

Our last day on the water was a straight run of approx. 10kms to Lakes Entrance along the Reeves Channel crossing over to Hopetoun Channel between Rigby and Fraser Islands so we could cruise past the Barrier which looks to have had some work done to improve the areas where large watercraft can now pull into pens for better parking along the beach, across to Cunningham Arm and the floating jetties where all boats were

able to secure berths. As soon as the boats were secured away it was over the esplanade and straight into the nearest coffee café for a caffeine fix, while the boys went by mini bus back to Sale to retrieve cars/trailers I suspect the girls had lunch followed by some retail therapy. After picking up the cars and trailers it was straight back to Lakes and get the boats onto the trailers and then head for home into the setting sun, thankfully most of the traffic had cleared by then and we had an easy stress-free drive home.



Dael and myself had a fantastic time on this cruise and met some new Whittley friends who I am sure we will see on future trips, we have also taken a trip that when you tell your friends what you did on the weekend they will say "I have always wanted to do that trip", It really makes it so much easier to do these types of events when there is good background knowledge and planning and this trip was very well researched and thought out, many thanks to Gary and Lee for all the background work and also to JB who assisted with the recon for the trip as well.

Cheers and see you on the water somewhere soon.

Laurie