

## Queensland Regatta – MacLeay Island Cruise

Attending at least one Whittley Regatta should be on the bucket list of every Whittley boat owner.

If you have never attended one, it is an amazing adventure. Where else will you get the opportunity to go cruising with up to 50 other boats, just like yours? Spend 4 days minimum on the water, talking, socialising and dining with, like minded Whittley owners. Then be guided on at least three cruises, to new and interesting locations, in a safe, co-ordinated and well planned manner, where you just follow your Team Leader and Trip Co-ordinator to enjoy the scenery! It is that simple.

For each Regatta, a big part of the adventure is getting there, particularly if it is interstate. I have found after attending 3 Regattas that it is very important to plan your trip. You need to allow plenty of time to get to and from the destination and importantly, time to spend exploring other waterways local to that area, before or after the Regatta.



*Figure 1 - Blue Team Cruise Briefing*



*Figure 2- Green Team Cruise Briefing*



*Figure 3- Couran Cove Marina and Apartments*

At this year's Queensland Regatta, the boats were divided into three groups – Blue, Green and Orange. There were about 15 boats in each group and each day your group would complete one of the three cruises. After breakfast and attending your cruise briefing, you would head off, in your Whittley, following your local experienced Trip Co-ordinator around the Moreton Bay waterways, stopping at a specified location where lunch was provided. After a casual lunch we would then cruise back to the Couran Cove Marina where you would gather for pre-dinner drinks, the evening meal and some entertainment.

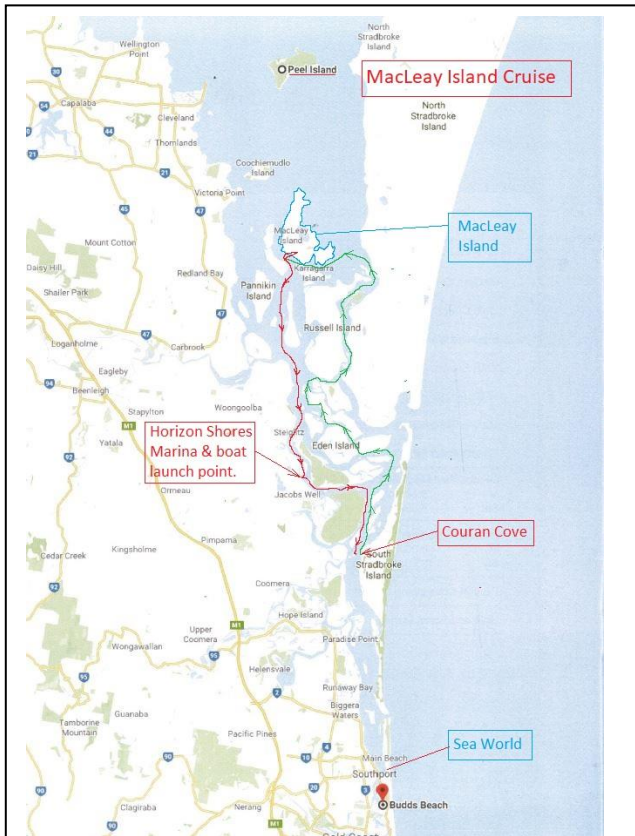


Figure 5 - Cruise course from Couran Cove to MacLeay Island and Return

On Day 1 of the Regatta, Blue Team were meant to cruise to Peel Island which is located halfway up North Stradbroke Island. Unfortunately the wind started to blow from the south making weather conditions unfavourable for this trip. We ended up cruising to MacLeay Island located at the southern end of North Stradbroke which was more sheltered from the wind.



Figure 4 -Couran Cove Marina

We left the Couran Cove Marina at 9.30 am and headed north following the narrow channels along the shore line of South and North Stradbroke Islands. The channels were well marked but the water could be shallow outside the channel markers at low tide. Lucky we had lots of local knowledge with us and none of the Blue Team ran aground on any of the sandbanks. We cruised past Russell Island which is famous for land being sold in the 1980's that disappeared under the water at high tide. We anchored off MacLeay Island in a sheltered cove in time for lunch. The Queensland members ferried us in their tenders across the busy waterway dodging passenger and car ferries from the surrounding islands. This was different boating to what us Victorians are usually do. Nearly all Queensland members have a tender as they anchor instead of using jetties or nudging into banks due to large tidal range.

We walked 100 metres up the road to enjoy lunch at the Paradise Hotel. It was great to relax and meet members of the NSW and QLD Whitley Clubs.



Figure 6 - Blue Team on the plane Cruising north towards Russell Island



Figure 7- Lunch stop at the Paradise Hotel -

After lunch we made our way back to our boats and followed our Trip Co-ordinator back to Couran Cove, stopping at Horizon Shores Marina for a fuel stop and coffee. The Cruise to MacLeay Island was quite an easy cruise, not rough, a bit of a challenge to follow the sometimes narrow channel markers but very scenic cruise. It was made a lot easier by the fact that Lee and I teamed up with Tony and Di and had a very relaxing cruise on Serenity. We didn't see a lot of MacLeay Island as the lunch stop at the Paradise Hotel was only a short walk from where we came ashore on the tenders. The Pub was a classic, locals basic pub with limited beers on tap, cheap meals, simple décor and classic stubbie holders. It was a ripper place for a lunch stop. Upon returning to Couran Cove there was time for a quick drink to compare trips with our other teams before having a delicious BBQ Dinner at the Poolside Restaurant.

Moreton Bay is a massive waterway, protected from the open ocean by North and South Stradbroke Islands. There is just so much to explore.

Couran Cove Resort and Marina is an amazing facility with its ample marina berths, bars, restaurants, café, pools, sporting and entertainment facilities, access to the surf beach and the beautiful sunset beach bar. The staff were helpful and friendly and Queensland Whittley Club did an amazing job, organising and hosting the 2018 Whittley Regatta. They have set the bar exceptionally high in Regatta organisation. I really enjoyed our time at the 2108 Regatta, meeting new friends and catching up with friends we had met on previous Regattas. Thank you to all who attended and looking forward to catching up again in Victoria in 2020.



Figure 8 - Happy Hour, prior to pre-dinner drinks



Figure 10 - Sunset Beach Bar – Pre Dinner Drinks. Just enjoying the view in a beautiful location....."Does it get any better than this?"

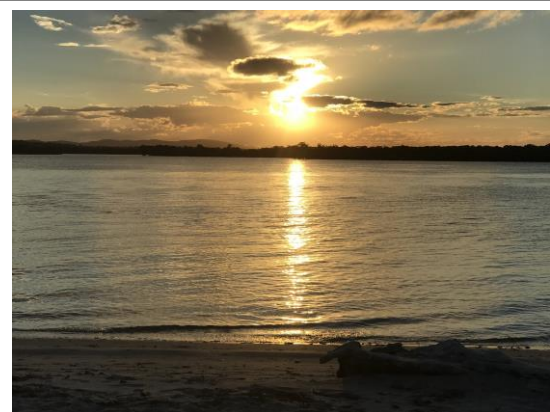


Figure 9 - Now you know why we are all smiling! Drinks on the beach with a sunset to boot!

Cheers

Gary Honeychurch