



Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club Inc.

Glenelg River Cruise Report – 27/12/18 to 2/1/2019

The Glenelg River!

A Water way I did not know existed, three years early. A waterway in Victoria that runs out of the Grampians, flows south through Casterton and Dartmoor before it enters the Lower Glenelg National Park. A water way that, heads west, goes into South Australia, then back into Victoria, to flow into the ocean at the small town of Nelson, about 20km from the Victorian / South Australia border. A water way that is 4 hours 41 minutes drive from Flinders street station. A water way that is navigable for 60km upstream from Nelson, at the mouth. A waterway that very few Whittley Club members had ever previously cruised. 13 club boats registered for this 5 night cruise. None of the crews or boats had ever been on this water way! It was going to be an interesting adventure.



Figure 1- Nelson - The Mouth of the Glenelg River

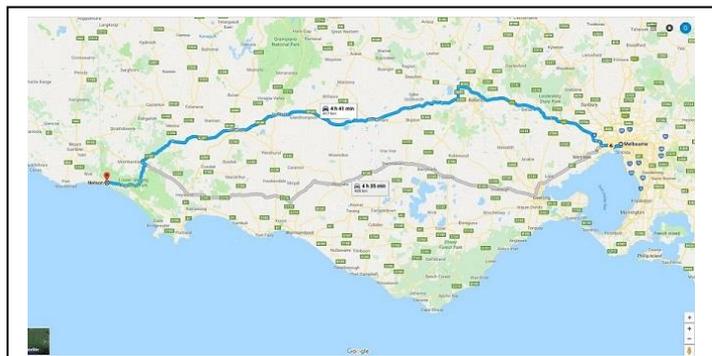


Figure 2 -Melbourne to Nelson

Crews Registered:

- Lucky Us – Gary & Lee Honeychurch
- Sienabelle - Mario & Fil Greco
- Ruby Tuesday - Wilco, Marisca & Eric Seinen
- The Boss - Renato & Dominica Greco
- Impulse - Mike & Monica Jones
- Sea Legend - Cliff James
- Full of Beans - Nigel & Ann Cousins
- Sea-Ya - Craig, Alana, Cody, Talia & Zac Wigthon
- Jay Jay - Jay Davis
- Casper - Peter & Gail Miller
- To The Point - Dean, Tracey, Manning & Bryce Worsley
- Mahalo - Laurie & Dael Jackson
- Hollywood - Peter & Coby Morris



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Nelson is a beautiful little town on the mouth of a very big river. There is only the Pub, a small Kiosk, for basic supplies, an information centre, petrol station, caravan park and two boat ramps. All crews arrived in Nelson on or before Thursday 27 December 2018, some launched and stayed on their boats, some stayed in B&B's others stayed on their boats on shore, all enjoyed a meal at the only pub and eatery in town. Unfortunately, due to illness, Peter & Coby Morris were a last minute withdrawal and only 12 boats started the cruise on the Friday morning 28 December 2018.



Figure 3 - Nelson Pub Thursday 27 Dec



While the last 6 boats were launched, four of the crews took tenders 2km downstream to see the mouth of the Glenelg. We must thank Gary Coutter from the Nelson Visitors Centre for the information on the Glenelg River, recommendations on places to camp and visit and for allowing us to park out trailers on his property during the cruise.



Figure 5- Launching at Nelson west boat Ramp



Figure 4 - Crews been to the mouth of the Glenelg River



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By 10:00am on Friday, all vehicles and trailers had been parked and all 12 boats, 8 tenders and 28 crew, headed upstream on a Glenelg River adventure. With most of the river limited to 5 knots, it was a very slow and relaxing cruise.

Friday 28 December 2018:

The River is wide and deep and the first thing we noticed as we left Nelson, cruising under the highway bridge, which is the main road between Portland and Mount Gambier, is the number of river front shacks on the banks of the Glenelg. Some of the shacks only have river access and in the garages, boats are parked, not cars.



Figure 6 - Leaving Nelson



Figure 7 -River Shacks leaving Nelson

The second thing we noticed was how we had quickly cruised off the grid. There was no phone service or internet for the next 4 days until we returned to Nelson. We also found ourselves in South Australia for a short time, then shadowed by very large Limestone cliffs on the river banks.



Figure 9 - In South Australia its only 4 knots



Figure 8 - Limestone cliffs



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By 12:30 we had travelled 12km and arrived at the Princess Margaret Rose Caves for a lunch stop. These are natural Limestone caves and a local tourist attraction. The caves were very interesting and easily accessible by a 2 minute walk from our boats. It was in the mid to high, 30 degree temperatures on the river, so the caves were a welcome relief from the heat during the half hour tour underground. As Bryce Worsley commented, "Not your expected Whittley Cruise destination. It was very impressive, glad we took a tour!"

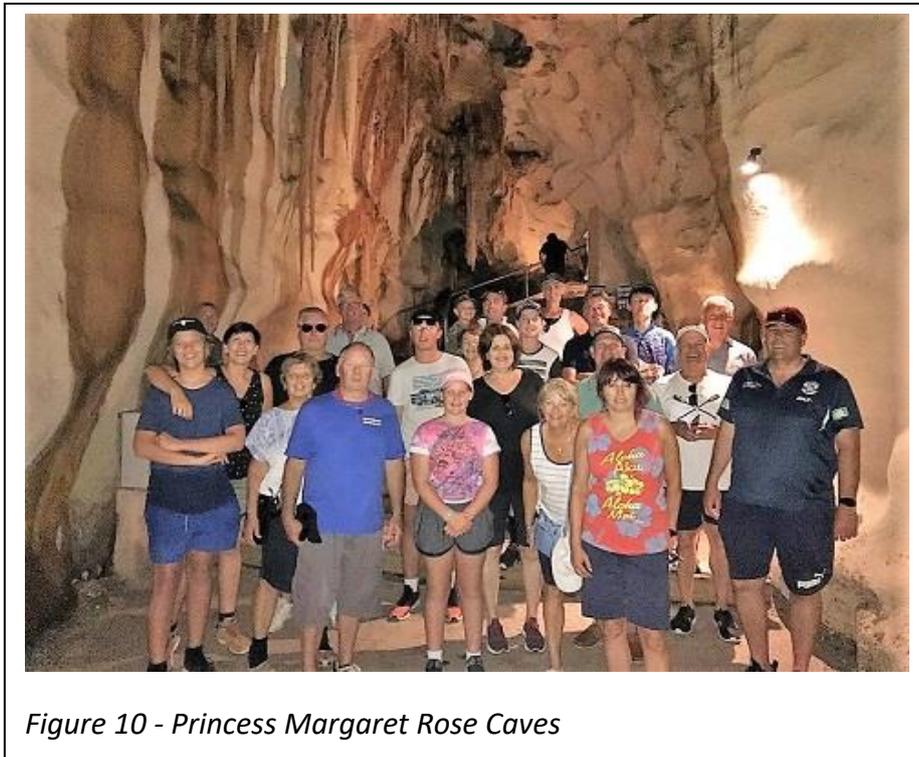
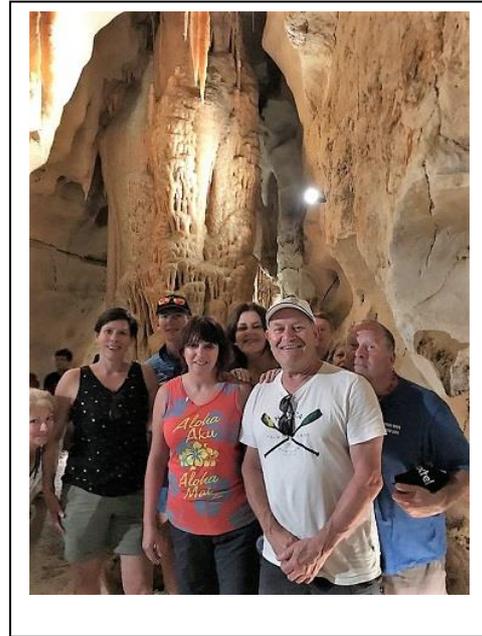
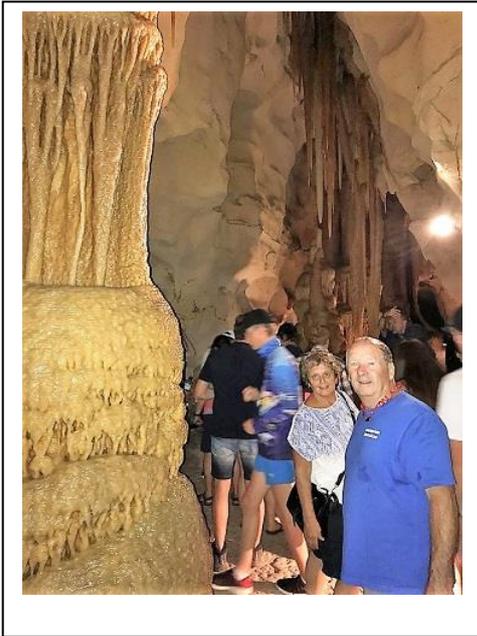


Figure 10 - Princess Margaret Rose Caves



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Friday was the expected hottest day of the cruise, so we only continued a further 4km up stream to our second nights stop on the river at Sandy Water Holes. The jettys are small on the Glenelg River. Built more for canoes. Improvisation in mooring up was required so all crews had access to the facilities on shore without the need for front boarding ladders, or getting your feet wet and muddy. Getting cool was easy, and there were lots of the crews in river.



*Figure 12 - Sandy Water Holes
28/12/18*



*Figure 11 - Sandy Water holes -
Ladies Lounge.*

Saturday 29 December 2018:

It rained over night and during the morning. We took this inclement weather as an opportunity to cruise as far as we could up stream at a comfortable 8 knot maximum pace.

Twenty-eight km from Sandy water holes found us at a place called, "Pritchards", one of the vehicle assess camping sites where we stopped for lunch.



We cruised a further 3.2km to a less populated camping area called, "Saunders Landing", to stay for our 3rd night on the river.



*Figure 13 - Pritchards for Lunch - Sat
29/12/18*



Melbourne Whittleby Cruiser Club Inc. Glenelg River Cruise Report – 27/12/18 to 2/1/2019



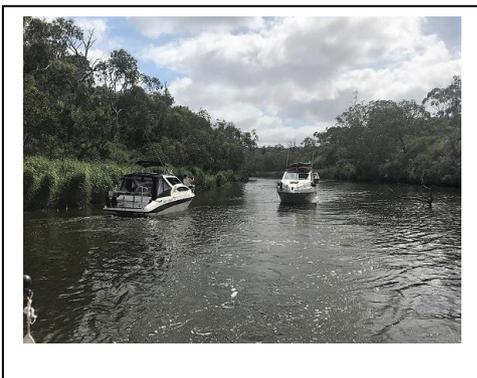
Figure 14 - Saunders Landing Sat 29/12/18



Our third night on the Glenelg, with no other campers, except the 12 Whittleby cruisers, gave us the opportunity to relax and enjoy the tranquillity of the Lower Glenelg National park. Happy hour at Saunders landing, Saturday night, started with a camp fire, marsh mellows and finished with music provided by Talia on the Ukulele which had us all singing. There goes the Tranquillity!

Sunday 30 December 2018:

From Saunders landing all 12 boats continued 6.8km up stream to take us all, 52.5km up the Glenelg River from Nelson. At this point, just past "Moleside", we turned around and headed back down stream. Koala spotting was the entertainment for all crews as we wound our way back down stream at a very leisurely 8 knots and we did spot some 8 or 10 Koalas in trees on the river banks.





Melbourne Whitley Cruiser Club Inc.

Glenelg River Cruise Report – 27/12/18 to 2/1/2019



Sunday night, we camped at “Battersby’s”, on the south side of the river, where the river is very straight, wide and 6 to 8m deep. This made it an ideal place for those wild tender pilots to safely hold the inaugural “Glenelg River Tender racing challenge”. With 8 tenders, a beautiful warm afternoon and no shortage of wild speed demons ready to take to the outboard tiller, there was some fun and entertainment for competitors and spectators alike. Thanks to Jay, and some very accurate handy capping, I think it was Cody on Lucky Us to just edge out, Super Mario, Raging Renato and Maddog Manning, to take the win in the final. I think “Put Put Pete” in the “Eco friendly, Casper electric tender”, may still be heading to the finish line!

There are 4 small jetty’s and only two vehicle camp sites at Battersby’s. There are drop toilets, a fire pit and a shelter on a very big grassy area. A perfect setting for happy hour after a swim and a chat with local wildlife.





Melbourne Whittleby Cruiser Club Inc. Glenelg River Cruise Report – 27/12/18 to 2/1/2019

Monday 31 December – New Years Eve:

On the last day of 2018, was fantastic that we found many of the girls at the helms on the 12 Whittlebys. Jay continued educating another one of the young guys for the third day in a row, allowing Bryce, Manning and Eric to have, “a day with Jay”, driving the new “Jay Jay” for a day, as on Monday we cruised 16.5 km down stream from Battersby’s to Sandy Water Holes.

It was calm and sunny and Bryce made great use of these conditions on our way to Sandy Water Holes, to use his drone, to take some spectacular photos of the Whittlebys on the Glenelg River. Thanks Bryce and “To the Point” Crew.



All crews had liked “Sandy Water Holes” on the 2nd night camp, and it was agreed by all to be a great camp site to celebrate the new year. It had the largest Jetty we had seen which became the party deck for New Years Celebrations that evening.

It was another beautiful afternoon and most crews prepared for the News Year, with a swim in the river and some fishing. We were thankful again for the wood gatherers, as the fire served to cook dinner and keep some of us warm later in the evening.

We had one important task to perform on New year’s Eve, and thanks to Talia, who had made a “Get Well Sign”, for Peter Morris, who could not make the cruise, and Bryce’s Drone, we were all able to send Peter and Coby some “Get Well Wishes” from all the crews on the Glenelg river.



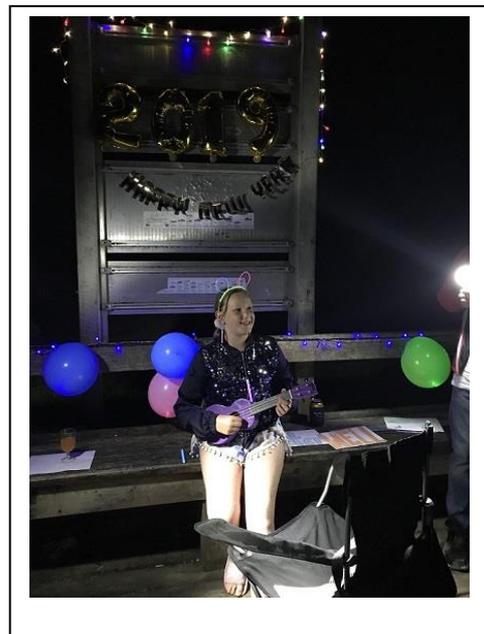
Figure 16 - Get Well Peter!





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As usual, with every Whittley cruise happy hour, it is a time to share a drink, too much food and recall the events of a day's cruising. Of course, New Year's Eve, on the Glenelg River, was a first for all of us. With no other people around, we all got into the spirit and dressed the place up with fairy lights and glow sticks. Talia and Zac entertained the crews with some, singing, dancing and playing of the ukulele. As we counted down the seconds to New Year's Eve, we were all surprised to see a large cruise boat, with up to 50 people from the local wooden boat club on board, come cruising past and happily join in the celebrations from their boat.

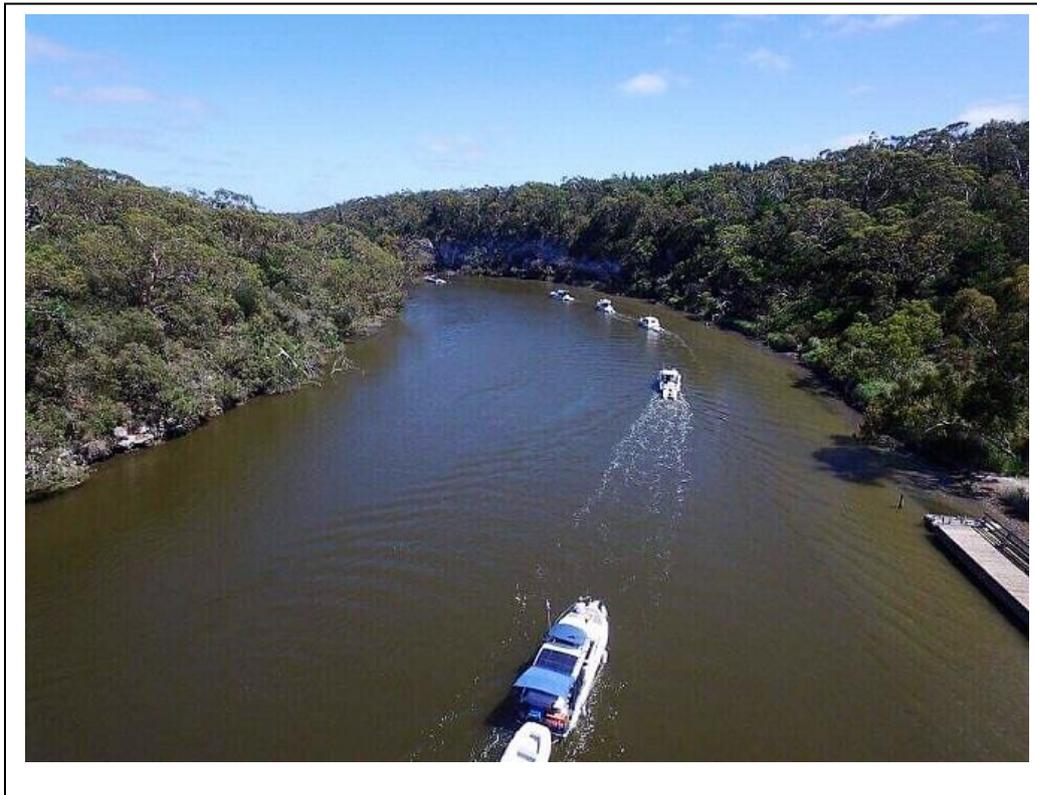
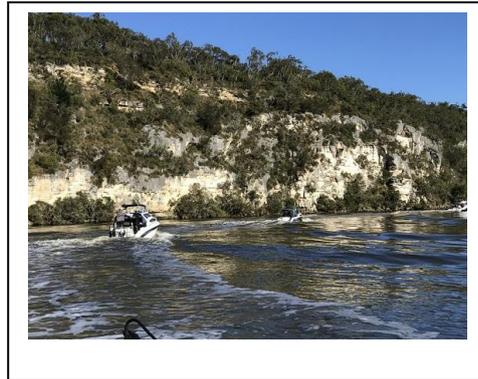




Melbourne Whitley Cruiser Club Inc. Glenelg River Cruise Report – 27/12/18 to 2/1/2019

We all saw in the new year to finish a very interesting, fun, cruise on the Glenelg River.

I would like to thank all the crews for their enthusiastic participation, assistance with our, "On the run" cruise planning, patients in mooring and for just having a fun time on the water, while we all completed an incident free cruise, on a waterway that none of us had ever cruised before. Thanks!



The Glenelg River, A Beautiful Waterway! Happy New Year!

Gary & Lee Honeychurch