



Melbourne Whittley Cruiser Club Inc.

Westernport Trip Report 24th April- 25th April 2021

Finally, the club had made a brave attempt yet again to have a cruise on Westernport bay, something that I had been looking forward to since joining the club 7 years ago.

Some of the boats arrived at Yaringa Marina (Sommerville) on the Friday 23rd during the day such as

- Rod White (Odyssey)
- Peter Walters & Vicki (Mabel 2)
- Richard Dong & Mal (Big Dong)
- Erwin & Phil (Black Betty) &
- Stuart & Annette (Zero Tolerance) late that night.

Yaringa Marina

Yaringa Marina is a great place to take your boat. Very easy launch ramp, secure parking for your car & trailer, good and clean shower toilets and laundry facilities. I would say the staff at the marina and the restaurant would have to be the friendliest and most helpful group that I have met. (Very different to Hastings Marina!!!). Berthing facilities were very good with power and water and modern floating pontoons. There is petrol at the marina and boat wash facilities to run your motors and clean your boats after you retrieve.

Cptn Jacks restaurant is a stones throw from your mooring and provides great meals, a cosy atmosphere, they even gave us 1 free drink at arrival to lure us in at happy hour which was probably not necessary if they knew the tradition of Happy Hours at the MWCC!!

Every Body Arrives

Over the week we had a number of boats who for one reason or another dropped out and our numbers dropped from 14 boats registered to 6 by the start of the bell.

The cruise participants were Peter & Vicki (Mabel 2), Richard & Mal (Big Dong), Rod (Odyssey), Steve Pate & Arthur Biri (Hey Cisco), Erwin & Phil (Black Betty) and our Stuart & Annette (Zero Tolerance) cruise leader and Peter Holyoak who hitched a ride with Odyssey and Black Betty.

Cruising over the next few days was led by the fearless Stuart & Annette in Zero Tolerance who took us to many different spots such as Newhaven, Rhyll, Cowes, French Island, Hastings Marina and even 1 kilometer from Seal rock. Westernport surprised me as I had heard so many negative reports about tides, depths and winds that seem to put many people off from exploring the waterways. My observations were that as long as you followed the markers, used your Navionics or charts and kept up to date with tides and winds, Westernport is a really great boating destination so close to Melbourne that does not deserve its negative reputation.

We made many stops for ice-cream, coffee, photos and to stretch our legs.



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General Observations

Newhaven Marina

We stopped at Newhaven Marina and had lunch. The marina is open for casual berthing and charges \$35 per night. It has a good club house with showers, toilets power etc. It does not have fuel. It has a launching ramp close by but not to be used by the faint hearted as it is very exposed and has a very old jetty to tie against.

Rhyll

There is a public jetty for casual berthing, which is often busy, so we were required to raft up against it. If you take a short walk there is a fish-n-chips shop, coffee shot and a Mercury Boating store. Everything closes early or does not open during weekend hours!!?

Cowes Jetty

The jetty is under repair and there was nowhere to berth other than dropping anchor near shore.

Hastings Marina

We cruised into the marina and were told that it was a private marina and we could not park there even though there was a massive space for parking and we said we were only going to be there for about an hour. However, if you go around the corner there is a very good public floating marina where you can berth and have a walk to pub.

French Island

There is a jetty at French Island where you can park but it's very exposed and typical of an old wooden jetty that needs repair. It's not really inviting for docking the boat that you love.

Happy Hours & restaurant night

In the tradition of the MWCC, Happy Hours were religiously held and on Friday we were joined by Paul & Marielle Van Pampus. A dinner was held at the restaurant on the Saturday night, with all attending including Richards wife Vivian and son Jerry, Sue joined with Steve, our newest members Kevin & Jenny Lang (Dwyer Straits) who had some boat issues and disappointingly couldn't bring their boat. The food and company were excellent and the night was a big success.

Most pulled out on Sunday with only the die-hards being Black Betty, Mabel2 and Odyssey who stayed on for one happy hour and a cruise back to Rhyll and French Island the next day.

Thanks



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A very big thanks to Stuart and Annette (Zero Tolerance) for organizing and leading the cruise. Annette was unwell with the flu the whole weekend and Stuart came down with the flu the following day so it was a major effort for them which we all really appreciated.

Written by Erwin Abbinga, Black Betty