

Newsletter of the OGA Western Australia

The Association for Gaff-Rig
and Traditional Sailing



December 2017

www.gaffrigsailinginwa.org



Dawesville Raid

President's Log

Dear OGA of WA Members,

We are now well into the “official” sailing season and the OGA of WA is well represented in the Swan River Retro Yacht Series especially in Division III where our C Fleet yachts dominate. There has been fun on the water there but also some contentious incidents which brings me to the point of suggesting that all OGA of WA sailors should be thoroughly aware of the “rules of the road” when sailing. When racing, a thorough knowledge of the Racing Rules for Sailing are also required to understand situations when starting, mark rounding and so on.

For me, I have been loathe to protest another yacht, in fact have never done so in the time from 1970 when I started racing in Herons, then Hobie cats, Flying 15s and more recently in my BayRaider 20 in the Retro Series. I have relied on common sense and sportsmanship to resolve any (though few) incidents or potential incidents. Recent events have caused me to review this and I will now dust off my protest flag (if I can find it).

In saying this, the ability to protest does not obviate the necessity to demonstrate good sportsmanship and common sense on and off the water.

On a more positive note I am pleased to see that at time of writing the OGA of WA has 45 financial members. A very good situation for us and I congratulate Belinda Bennett, our Membership Coordinator, on her efforts. We do need to expand our membership and your Committee and the OGA Members at large should keep an eye open for potential new members.

One important factor in attracting and retaining members is our program which the Committee has dedicated a lot of time in developing and with which certain individuals are heavily involved in planning and executing particular events. Thanks to all for their efforts. Any suggestions for events are welcome, especially those which can involve ALL of the OGA member yachts.

By the time this newsletter goes to press C Fleet will have completed their Peel – Harvey Inlet Rally where ten yachts are expected to sail from Port Bouvard Yacht Club to explore the Peel and Harvey Estuaries and perhaps venture out through the Dawesville Cut.

A similar rally was held by the OGA of WA at Lake Dumbleyung and one-day cruises on the Murray River and Peel Inlet this year. A further rally is to be held at Walpole (Nornalup Inlet) prior to the Walpole Regatta in March followed by another at Denmark (Wilson Inlet).

The OGA of WA also tries to involve the larger gaffers and with this in mind is planning a raft up to coincide with SoPYC's Wooden Boat Rally in February – keep an eye out for further information on this proposed event.

The OGA program for 2017-2018 is updated as necessary and is available to view on line on the OGA website (www.gaffrigsailinginwa.org)

General Meetings this year have been well attended and some excellent talks presented. More are planned and members are encouraged to attend.

Finally, on behalf of the OGA Committee, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and safe and prosperous New Year and we look forward to seeing you on the water at OGA events. Good sailing and fair winds,

Chris Robinson
President
OGA of WA



Lake Dumbleyung Raid

Always looking for new seas to cross and shores to explore C Fleet headed 260km inland, into the wheat belt, to Lake Dumbleyung. For the first time since 2005 Lake Dumbleyung was full and we were determined to make the most of it.

For many of us it was our first visit to Dumbleyung, the site where Donald Campbell set the world water speed record in 1964. The size of the lake is astonishing, imagine something the size of Peel Inlet in the middle of the wheat belt.



We had quite a fleet: *Arapaoa*, *Crazy Bird*, *Fala*, *How Bazaar*, *Precious Little*, *Rapscallion*, *Wee Birlinn*, and *Whimbrel*. Dave Cliff came up from Denmark to join us as well.

We had a wonderful weekend exploring the lake's shoreline, discovering its little bays and dodging the dead trees along the shoreline. The locals were delighted to see us gracing the lake. They had pulled out their surf cats, ski boats and kayaks from their sheds and were enjoying the water too.





On Sunday Dave Cliff and I attempted to find the Coblinine River. As you can see from our track we were barking up the wrong tree(s)!. A little homework beforehand with Google Earth would have been a good idea...



The cultural highlight of the weekend was our Saturday night dinner at the 'GODI' (Grand Old Dumbleyung Inn). Our visit coincided with the shearing competition! Packed in with the crowd at the back of the hotel we were treated to a spectacle. Wool was flying, sheep were escaping, judges were judging, music was playing, and the crowd cheering and shouting. Some of the shearers were managing to get the fleece off in under a minute!



A personal take on the 2017 Lake Dumbleyung Raid.

In February 2007 John and I were returning from a 6 week camper trip to Tasmania and the Hobart Wooden Boat Show. We always enjoyed finding different routes home through the WA country towns and had heard about Dumbleyung from Geoff Vardy. He had told us about how the lake fills occasionally and what a terrific regatta there had been in 2006. So it seemed worth checking the water level in the lake 15 months later.

There being little or no information in town at that time, it was a wonderful voyage of discovery to find our way to the lake and the Petticoat Hill memorial to Donald Campbell. We had had no idea whatsoever that this was the site of that daring feat. I wish I could find our photos of the overgrown track to the lake and the fallen tree we had to negotiate not to mention the end of the wooden launching ramp hanging high and dry some 1-2 metres above the water. The current ramp is concrete.

We decided that we would keep an eye on Lake Dumbleyung and return one day for a sail.

When we got home later that day and collected our mail from our neighbour we were full of the discovery of Lake Dumbleyung and Donald Campbell's memorial. She listened quietly and waited for a gap in the enthusiastic stream and then said "I know. I was there. We had a school trip from Williams to watch the event". Well! Blow me down!

The years have passed and John now sails happily somewhere in the Big Blue Yonder, but 10 years later, thanks to OGA and Andrew with his lovely BayRaider *Fala*, I was able to tick a very important Bucket List item, and with some hope of doing it again next year.

Many thanks OGA. The fun rolls on and long may it continue.

Pauline Dilley



From the archives...

A Brief History of The Old Gaffers Association in Western Australia

One Sunday in March 1980 I placed an advertisement in the Sunday Times seeking people who were interested in old gaff rigged wooden boats. I received some replies to this advertisement and on the following Friday we had the first meeting in my private museum of what was to become the Old Gaffers Association of Western Australia. As well as Doris and myself, there were Keith and Barbara Thomas, then of Gosnells, Bran Axccl, from Orelia, and Dave Brown from City Beach. (They bravely turned up in spite of the pouring rain).

At this stage I simply wanted to talk to people who had the same interest as myself in old working boats. However we sent out regular newsletters with items of interest and in July of that year we began charging an annual fee of \$5.00 to cover expenses and gave ourselves a name!

By 1981 we had 21 paid up members and held our first race from the Royal Flying Squadron on 18th April 1982, with fifteen confirmed starters. These were as follows:

Boat Name	Owner
<i>Jean Dee</i>	Barry Hicks
<i>Lady Rose</i>	Robin Hicks
<i>Suzy Wren</i>	Ron Howells
<i>Margot</i>	Tony Larard
<i>Jolly Roger</i>	Mike Snedden
<i>Kesuba</i>	Keith Thomas
<i>Vandra</i>	Peter Hick
<i>Gumleaf</i>	Jack Gardner
<i>Delta</i>	Brian Axccl
<i>Eliza</i>	Tony Mills
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Murray Edmonds
<i>Koorooloo</i>	Bob Richards
<i>Trident</i>	Ted Taylor
<i>Vagabond</i>	Sam Small
<i>The Ding</i>	Pelita Clarke

The race was won by Keith Thomas.

In 1982 I handed over the running of the Old Gaffers Association to Frank Marchant as Robin and I had become involved in other nautical interests, later to lead to the research and rigging of STS Leeuwin. In my time with the Old Gaffers I met many very interesting people, and just before Christmas each year we held a party in our museum for up to sixty Old Gaffers and visiting ships. One year we had the crew of the *Klaraborg* (owned by Ove Linner and Sally Wright); sadly she was later lost off the WA coast. The crew of *Romance* also joined us on one occasion, and then Tiger Timbs, owner/skipper of the *Eye of the Wind* and his crew. (He still has the ship, together with a wife and five-year-old daughter).

As I write this the telephone rings and it is Tiger Timbs himself, ringing from Cape Town and wanting new belaying pins made for this ship. She will be in WA again in two years.

For several years the Old Gaffers would sail on Sundays and meet up at the Applecross Jetty where we boarded other boats and had a picnic and a swim and talked about all things nautical. Happy days! The races have now become a regular feature and are enjoyed by many. Old Gaffers would have lots of interesting stories to tell of events over the last fifteen years, and of course there have been many new members since then.

We certainly have many happy memories of people and events connected with the Old Gaffers Association and will always be glad that we placed the original Ad in the Sunday Times!

Barry Hicks
October 1995

Every sailing expedition should include a good fruit cake in its provisioning list...

Jean's Pineapple Fruit Cake

(A variation on the Pineapple Fruit Cake in the Womens Weekly "Best Ever Fruit Cakes" November 1973)

Ingredients

15 oz (450 gm) can of crushed pineapple
1lb (500 gm) mixed fruit
4 oz (110 gm) butter or substitute
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon mixed spice
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
2 eggs
1 cup plain flour
1 cup self raising flour
¼ teaspoon salt

Cooking

Line deep 8 in round cake tin with two thicknesses of greaseproof paper, bringing paper 2 in above edges of tin.

Combine undrained pineapple, chopped fruit, butter, sugar, spice and soda in saucepan. Stir over heat until sugar is dissolved, bring to boil; boil uncovered for 3 minutes. Allow to become cold.

When cold, add beaten eggs and sifted dry ingredients; mix well. Spread evenly into prepared tin, bake in moderate oven 1½ to 2 hours. Cover, leave in tin until completely cold.

Jean recommends 150 deg C in the Robinson's fan forced oven but test with bamboo skewer to ensure it is completely cooked. She also pours a small amount of good brandy over the cold fruit cake, it adds a certain *je ne sais se quoi pas* to the final product.

Editor's Note:

One of Jean Robinson's Fruit Cakes was subjected to extensive testing by Chris Robinson and myself during our Shark Bay trip earlier this year. We can assure you that this expedition proven recipe is excellent!



25°38'15.8"S 113°34'14.7"E

Shark Bay Cruising Thoughts

Peter Kovesi



In June this year Chris Robinson and I did a cruise in Shark Bay. You can read about our adventures at www.peterkovesi.com/whimbrel/sharkbay2017.

Here I want to go through some of the practicalities of sailing unsupported in such a remote location. We hope that in future years others will take the plunge and try a Shark Bay adventure too!

The first thing to do is get a copy of *A Small Boat Cruising Guide to Shark Bay* by Terry Hinchliffe and Leon Deschamps. It is available in paper or ebook from Hinchy Books, PO Box 21. Dowerin, WA 6461. www.publications.hinchy.org

I wish I had encountered this book earlier. It is an invaluable guide to Shark Bay written from the perspective of a small trailer sailer and is very relevant to our style of sailing.

Boat

Needless to say your boat must be rugged, sea worthy, and simple to sail. It will cop some abuse and probably receive some minor damage too, you cannot be too precious about it. Reefing systems need to be quick and simple to use. Everything must work reliably. For maximum convenience the hull shape should be such that it stays upright when aground. You will have your boat sitting high and dry on the low tides routinely.

Good upwind performance is important. There will be times when you have to cover

considerable distances upwind, perhaps as much as 20km in a day.

Your boat will inevitably be filled with gear and the cockpit will get cluttered. A useful thing to do is to make boards that cover the forward part of your cockpit. Your gear can then sit under these boards. This will allow you to walk forward unimpeded and safely across your gear (and without damaging your gear) as you work your boat. You may also want the boards to sleep on.

Outboard

You should have one. As well as strong winds one can encounter extensive periods of no wind. Having an outboard gives you a better chance of getting to your next destination before dark. I would not like to repeat the midnight arrival in Tetraddon Loop that Paul Ricketts and I made in 2015! www.gaffrigsailinginwa.org/shark-bay-002

Clothing

You need good wet weather sailing gear. A good set of pants and jacket. Strong winds with constant spray can make you very cold. In October 2016 I was routinely wearing an additional light weight spray jacket under my main sailing jacket in order to keep warm on the windy days.

Night times can also get surprisingly cold. At times in June 2017 Chris and I were wearing three layers of clothing inside our sleeping bags.

Sun protection:

You are in the sun all day. The sun is potentially more dangerous than all the sharks in Shark Bay.

On warm sunny days it is useful to wear light weight long trousers to protect your legs from the sun. Otherwise I made sure I had a towel to drape over my legs while sailing for protection. Pay attention to the tops of your feet with lots of sun cream and/or footwear such as wetsuit booties or Crocs.

Feet and hands, but mainly feet

After a couple of days into your trip your feet and hands will be tender and sore. Walking will be painful and even the act of opening a plastic container with your hands will hurt. How does this happen? It comes about from your hands and feet being constantly damp and sandy.

Your feet suffer greatly because they have to be in shoes or sandals. You have to wear something on your feet in the water because our potential exposure to stone fish and other dangerous stinging creatures is high. We are always wading in and out of shallow water and the combination of damp soft skin being abraded by the sand that is inevitably in your footwear quickly produces very painful sores. I am not sure what the best answer is but next time I will try some wetsuit boots for walking in the water. I will have to be careful to ensure there is no sand in them when I put them on and hopefully they will keep the sand out.

Wear gloves to protect the hands from wear and the sun. When the skin becomes soft and pulpy from being damp for a few days it is so easy to cut and graze them. You will handle your anchor rope several times each day. Invest in some nice anchor rope that will be easy on your hands. Get rid of the nasty cheap silver rope that you currently have. Your hands will thank you for this.

Tides

Tide tables should be constantly at your side. Beware when you come ashore anytime after the high tide. In just ten minutes or so while you deal with something on your boat, have a discussion about alternate stopping points, or scout for a camping spot your boat can be left stranded on the sand only to be released in several hours time. Trust us!

The tidal flows in Shark Bay can be significant. The flow through the channels as the large basins fill or empty can be a wonderful boost or a curse. Note also there can be significant differences in the timing of the tides relative to the official tables for Denham. For example we noted that the tides

at Petit Point were at least two hours later than indicated by the tables.

The timing of high and low tides can be awkward. There were times when we had to wait until late morning for our boats to float free. Either we had not allowed enough depth before anchoring our boats for the night, or the shallows were too extensive to allow us to do so. In an ideal world you would time your cruising week to coincide with a period when the high tide was in the morning.

Anchor(s)

You will hear the old salts say “You need a good heavy anchor with lots of chain” and you say “Yeah yeah”. Well, it turns out that you do need a good heavy anchor with lots of chain!

Your anchoring ground may be a thin layer of easily shifted sand over rock, a low density porridge of sand mixed with shells, or sand mixed with chunks of broken coral that prevent the points of your anchor from burying properly. There are not many bays with good shelter in Shark Bay and your boat can often end up being more exposed than you would like. *Whimbrel* dragged her anchor on her trip in October 2016 and *Gryphon* dragged hers on our trip in June this year. I have spent some nights waking every hour just to check that my boat was still there. I have now invested in a very good anchor and this improves my sleep greatly!

If you have the space a second full sized anchor is probably nice to have. However at least carry a good small anchor. This is handy for either holding the stern away from the beach if the surge is pushing your boat in, or for holding the stern close to the beach when you are loading or unloading when the wind is pushing it off. (Warning: Do not get one of those blue plastic Cooper anchors. I had one, they are completely useless.)

Weather

Needless to say you will be always watching the weather. However there are many areas where you can be out of phone reception and will not be able to pick up a forecast over the web. In future I will also take a good

old fashioned AM/FM radio for picking up forecasts.

When you do get a forecast take note of what the wind will be at night as well as what it will be during the day. At night your boat will be at anchor and unattended while you sleep. If you know what the weather will be, and have selected your anchorage and prepared your boat accordingly, then you will be able to stay asleep.

Shelter

Exposure from the sun and wind is possibly the most dangerous thing you will encounter in Shark Bay. Over the years I have used a simple tarp shelter that has served me very well. It consists of a 2.4 x 3m (8'x10') tarp, 4 aluminium extendable poles (only 2 need be extendable), and a set of lines with home made PVC sand pegs.



Peg one edge down to the ground on the up-wind side using some large sand pegs and use the 4 poles with lines and pegs to form the back wall and roof. This gives you a nice living area protected from sun and wind where you can cook and generally hang around. A piece of 30% shade cloth works wonders as a ground sheet. The shade cloth 'floats' on the sand. Any sand on top (mostly) works its way through the shade cloth giving you a remarkably sand-reduced surface. Don't forget your chair.

Food

Not much to remark about here except that giving yourself a good lunch can be hard. Typically you are on the go sailing and you are not in a good situation to feed yourself

properly, especially if you are single handed. I have found that a couple of hard boiled eggs prepared at breakfast time provide you with some nourishing protein pills that you can take on the go. Eggs keep well at the bottom of a cool buoyancy tank. Each day try to prepare a snack box that contains all you need to get you through the middle of the day. Don't forget the fruit cake!

Spot Tracker

A Spot Tracker or equivalent device is great. The folks back home can follow your adventure vicariously and get considerable enjoyment from this. The sea rescue people will love you too (as long as you tell them your tracker address). They too can follow you with ease without the need for any radio contact. If the worst happens they do not need to search for you, they know exactly where to go.

Navigation

As well as looking at charts study your potential route carefully on Google Earth. Charts are constructed for people with big boats who don't want to go aground. Typically we *want* to go aground at least twice each day!

What the shallows and beaches are like of of great importance to us. Charts are not much good for this but Google Earth imagery is. The imagery can reveal many small features that cannot be represented on charts but nevertheless can be exploited by a small dinghy cruiser. Print out screen shots of areas of interest to refer to as you sail.



Generally what you are looking for are shel-

tered beaches where the shallows do not extend too far out from the shore. If your destination has a large expanse of shallows around it you can end up with your boat stranded a fair way from the beach leaving you with a long walk to get gear on and off your boat.

You should carry a GPS. Visual navigation can be hard, so many headlands and bays look alike. Using your hand held GPS drive the cursor to your destination and create a waypoint. Once you have a heading you can steer to your compass. A basic compass is all you need. You cannot steer a dinghy to better than 5 or 10 degrees at most, so there is no point in anything fancy. I use a Garmin kayaking compass held with shock cord to the top of my centre case.

Camp ashore or sleep aboard?

Ideally make arrangements for both options. Of course it depends on your boat but generally camping ashore is *very* much more comfortable than sleeping aboard. However, the cost is the effort of moving all your gear on and off the boat each day. Needless to say you should try to organise things so that the amount of gear you have to move is minimised.



Power and Charging

With just a little work keeping your gear charged is not too hard. The system I have put together with bits from Whitworths consists of a 12V 7.5AH battery with a cigarette lighter socket, a 10W Sunyo panel, and a 4 Amp Phocos charge controller.

I attached the charge controller to the top of the case that came with the battery to minimise the number of separate things. I am not sure how important it is to have a

charge controller for a such a small panel but it seemed wise and did not cost too much.



I used a (not very good) connector between the panel and the charge controller. The connector is useful because I can take the battery off the boat at the end of the day so that I could recharge all my bits and pieces on shore.

I have no fixed mounting spot for the solar panel. It sits loose in the cockpit and I slide it around as needed to keep it out of the shade of the sails and in the sun. There were occasions when I brought the panel ashore with the battery so that I could keep charging it.

With a bit of looking around you can source AA battery chargers that work from a 12v cigarette lighter, I got mine from Jaycar. I also managed to find a cigarette lighter charger for the battery of my SLR camera online.

When you store the system make sure you disconnect the battery from the charge controller as there is a very small residual circuit that will eventually flatten the battery (how do I know that?)

Finally

Do not get intimidated. The preparations and precautions one should take are straightforward. The hardest part is making the decision to go. Just do it! Anyone can do it, you will cope just fine. Make sure that you have a relaxed timetable so that you can sit out the days that are not good for sailing. Don't be too dogmatic about your planned destinations, choose and change them to suit the wind directions. It really does not matter where you go in Shark Bay, everywhere is amazing.

Web Links to Visit

Watch the dramatic hull turning of the 10 meter schooner designed by Francois Vivier at O'Connor Wooden Boats <https://youtu.be/dDQEybHA8cs>



Tony O'Connor's *Fontana* as you have never seen her before! <https://youtu.be/coA3DKlt3L0>



The Sail Craft Blog by Chris Thompson is a wonderful site. Chris has set out to document the history of the racing dinghy and has built up an amazing resource. <https://sailcraftblog.wordpress.com>



Two articles on Chris Thompson's site that caught my eye were a history of dinghy sailing in New Zealand and an article on the extraordinary contribution to dinghy sailing by Jack Holt and Beecher Moore.

- <https://sailcraftblog.wordpress.com/2017/09/28/growing-the-silver-fern-nz-dinghy-sailing-to-1950/>
- <https://sailcraftblog.wordpress.com/2017/11/21/holt-and-moore-designing-the-boom/>

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Location	Contact
26-30 Dec 2017	60th Cockburn Sound Regatta	TCYC	John Percy (TCYC) / Jim Black
14 Jan 2018	Retro Race 4	RFBYC	
24 Jan 2018	OGA General Meeting and talk 19:00 for 19:30	RFBYC	Andrew Bochenek
11 Feb 2018	Retro Race 5	RFBYC	
1-2 March 2018	OGA Walpole Rally	Walpole	John Longley / Jim Black
3-4 March 2018	Walpole in the Trees Regatta	Walpole YC	Jim Black
5-6 March 2018	OGA Denmark Rally	Denmark	Dave Cliff /Jim Black
11 March 2018	Retro Race 6	RFBYC	
28 March 2018	OGA General Meeting and talk 19:00 for 19:30	RFBYC	Andrew Bochenek
30 March 2018	OGA Good Friday Sail	Garden Island and TCYC	Pauline Dilley / Jim Black
15 April 2018	OGA Annual Regatta	RFBYC	John Longley
22 April 2018	Retro Race 7	RFBYC	
23 May 2018	OGA General Meeting and talk 19:00 for 19:30	RFBYC	Andrew Bochenek
25 July 2018	OGA General Meeting and talk 19:00 for 19:30	RFBYC	Andrew Bochenek

If you want to enjoy any of these events please do not hesitate to get in touch with the contact person. Crewing places are always available.

Contact the OGA

www.gaffrigsailinginwa.org

www.facebook.com/groups/1733609723588120/

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Dumbleyung Drinks!