



AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

Sept/Oct '07



Country member, Mal McKenzie's ex-cray boat, Illyria at her mooring in Esperance

OUR FIRST SHOW AND TELL FOR AGES

The Show and Tell Evening on the 25th July was very well received, with good attendance and a lot of interest. I'd done a bit of a ring around beforehand to make sure we had some starters for the evening but we got more than that anyway so it all went well.

The first presenter was Geoff Rumsay, who's building a 14' putt-putt designed by David Payne. This is to be powered by a 4hp West Ho engine, picked up apparently through the Sunday Times. Now West Hoes were made in Victoria Ave, Dalkeith, I think before the war, so this is a pretty rare beast and well worth conserving and using. The WA Maritime Museum has one West Ho single and a twin, but that's all. Geoff had several photos to project of the exercise and it's reached a about halfway. It's glued clinker with a cuddy cabin and despite the clinker laps is Dynel sheathed. Fortunately Dynel is

softer than 'glass but it must still be a challenge making it lie over the laps. Geoff's biggest challenge in the sheathing exercise came with his choice of resin – polyester. This gave him some bubbling and repairs to think about. He also had some trouble steaming timber and ended up doing the keel and various rubbing strips in several pieces but it's all looking fine now.

Les Simpson acquired his project part-finished. It's a Dolphin 16' kit from Queensland which was picked up at the shell stage. This boat has a single hard chine with a lot of deadrise forward but very little aft. Les has added a fairly generous cabin and will fit a motor later, but it will have a sailing rig as well. To this end there's a centre case waiting to be fitted, too. Les first turned the shell upside down and glassed the bottom so it should handle abrasion quite well. After

the cabin went on he built an anchor well into the bow – good idea, but the cabin restricts access somewhat and so he's now thinking of a foredeck hatch behind the well, too. This will make a great river and estuary boat when it's complete.

Somewhere about this time, someone, I can't remember who, showed three terrifying pictures of a boat launch gone wrong. A boat hoisted by crane or Cammy Lift had its bow sling break and dropped bow first, vertically into the water, with at least one person on board, all photographed. It surfaced, inverted and a total mess.

In Bob Walsh's absence, Mike Rogers gave an excellent talk on the 32' David Payne launch they're building together near Yunderup. This hull is in Kiri strip plank using strips mainly 100 X 18mm. It will be surmounted by a forward pilot cabin designed by Mike himself, giving it the air of a workboat or a New York harbour tug. Mike had photos of every stage, starting with the building frames and going through to the present stage of upright hull, partly fitted with bulkheads. As most people know, strip-planking assumes 'glass sheathing, inside and out to tie it all together, and this has been done, but not without difficulty. The resin used was Bote Cote's Contractors' Resin, not the stuff usually advertised. Trouble was, overnight and the following day this resin bubbled up and left the base timber in large areas, on several occasions. Inspections by the agents failed to resolve the problem and repairs have been carried out by grinding away the affected areas and re-glassing using the more common B/C product. The surface has been finished by bogging out with white micro balloons in resin and sanded smooth using an ingenious, hydraulically driven, flexible rotary sander on hire. Much better than torture boards!

Also of interest were pictures of the rolling over process. The shed was much too tight

for this, so the inverted hull was jinkered out into the open on a couple of 6' X 4' trailers. 5/8" pivot holes were drilled in bow and stern posts and these were pierced by appropriately-sized rods or bolts mounted on small front end loaders, positioned at bow and stern. The hull was thus lifted off the trailers, revolved and placed back onto rollers for return to the shed. Since then some bulkheads have been 'glassed in as well as engine mounts and floors and external bilge keels fitted. During the visit I assumed these to be lead, but they are only timber. Still, they'll keep it upright when the tide goes out. The main ballast will be in the centre keel which will be poured in concrete and scrap metal to save cost. The mould, ready now, doesn't have to resist high temperature, either. Should weigh about 300kg.

Mike also had pictures of a weird, wave-piercing, powered trimaran from Canada. This is intended to set a round-the-world record, running on bio-diesel. It's not meant to rise to waves ahead, just plough through 'em. Glad it's not me in the hot/cold seat!

Jay Niven had A4 prints rather than projected photos of his four boats, starting with a 15' stitch and glue which he'd first built. This was a centre console runabout for an 18hp outboard. Then there were shots of his now-venerable RL24 trailer sailer, followed by a 7/10 replica North American duck punt. This latter ends up at 7' long, double-ended and is non-functioning, having been built over two weekends as a largish wall decoration. Jay's present project is a 15' mahogany runabout, to be double-skinned and take a 65hp outboard. That should move it along a bit! The pictures were passed around the table and eagerly perused by all present.

All in all it was a great evening and our thanks are due to all the presenters

AN OLDIE BUT GOODIE

The Toolbox Visit to Chris Davis' home on 11th August was a great success, with many members taking the opportunity to view this historic restoration. Chris, himself, was a little abashed at the lack of work he's done in the last few years since we last visited, but with the recent, vast changes in membership of our group that hardly mattered. The main thing is, there were a lot of people there to appreciate Chris's meticulous approach to this major rebuild.



The subject is "Argosy", the 29' winner of the inaugural Fremantle to Bunbury race in 1948, when she was a brand new, gunter rigged yacht. (It should be noted that the 1948 event was a one-way event, not the present Bunbury – and – return affair) She was designed, and building commenced, by Ted Luck before the Second World War. Needless to say, the war put a hold on things while Ted served in the 9th Division, and she was completed in 1947, a huge project for a teenager. She had several owners and a long career in WA yachting before Chris bought her in 1987. Initial restoration work was commenced while the boat was still at RPYC. This largely involved stripping the hull and sistering-up many broken ribs to keep the hull together. A frame and awning was made to protect the vessel while it was returned to a mooring.

The next step was construction of a decent backyard workshop. Visitors could be excused from thinking this was the hobby itself. It's brick, with a very high cathedral roof and double doors at each end. The concrete floor is epoxy coated for easy

cleaning. All of it specifically contrived for the restoration of "Argosy". A low-loader was used to ferry the yacht from the water to Wembley and into a lane at the back of Chris's place that the workshop backs onto. At least Wembley still has back lanes! From there it was off loaded by crane, onto a very complete cradle already welded up by Chris in anticipation. This involves a base of 8" x 6" steel, with three upright, height-adjustable legs on each side, with carefully shaped pads to spread the load over the jarrah planks. The cradle was then manoeuvred into the shop on rollers.



Chris has done little work in recent years, but then, he is building a two storey house next door as well, which he and Leonie will move into when completed, and he has another yacht at RPYC, so he's got his hands full anyway. Argosy's planks are all in good nick, and the ribbing of the hull is fine too. As I recall, the keel is sound, too, but the stem needs replacement and Chris is still scratching his head over that one, the problem being to get it out from between the planks. The old one is in at least two pieces, and he's got the lower half out successfully but is still to remove the upper half.





When that's done, and the transom tidied up a bit, it will be time to start on a complete new fitout and the intention is to follow the 1947 layout and appearance as closely as possible and to return to the original gunter (gaff) rig as well. It should be a delightful blast from the past when Chris gets the whole project complete.

I might add that the excellent afternoon tea provided by Leonie and Chris was very welcome and quickly devoured by the many members present.



NEWS

WOODEN BOAT WORKS (Fremantle) which suffered a severe setback when its Principal, Graham Lahiff, died is just about up and running again under the management of Brian Phillips. Brian, whose Baldivis property we've been to for Toolbox Visits in the past, is currently setting up at 106 Quill Way, Henderson and he's still trying to get the original workshop in Slip St, Fremantle from the FPA, but he's not very hopeful. Brian will be conducting trade and apprenticeship courses and expects to include some classes for amateur boat builders such as ourselves as well. This is good news for us. We've been considering putting out feelers for expressions of interest from members for some sort of course or programme but Brian's scheme could be much better.

EAST PERTH JAZZ AND WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL. We're not sure if this event will happen again, or not. The East Perth Redevelopment Authority has surrendered the event to the City of Perth proper, and it probably won't happen until March, 2008. The '06 event was quite good and it would be pleasing to see the event continue. Watch this space.

BOAT FOR FREE. I thought that magic word free might suck you in! Peter Leggatt is aware of a 25' motor sailer in need of restoration at RPYC. It was designed and built by the Sambrailos in Fremantle some 40 or 50 years ago, and apart from some cracked ribs in need of sistering up, the hull seems to be in pretty good order. The owner has removed the 3 cyl. Volvo MD 2040 and gearbox for separate sale at \$5000 and will part with the boat itself, including rig and new cushions, at no charge. It sounds like a pretty straight forward restoration project if anyone's interested. Ring Alan Langer for more info on 9409 3088.

ADMINISTRATION NOTES

ABBA COMMITTEE

Bob Walsh President 9537 8570
Rosemary Nayler Sec/Treas 9455 1470
Mike Beilby Newsletter 9397 6209
Mike Rogers Library 9527 7313

TECHNICAL MEETING; The next evening meeting will be on Wednesday 26th September and we will be addressed by new member and very experienced boatie, Ed Essers, on the subject of steel boat construction. We're the only state association which doesn't use the word "wooden" in its name, because amateurs often use other materials as well. This talk will be for some of those others. That's at S of PYC at about 7.45pm, in the Committee Room. Get there by about 7.00 if you want to try the excellent buffet meal first.

TOOLBOX VISIT; This will be to the home of Jay Niven at 15 Bolt Court, Lesmurdie on Saturday, 13 October between 2 and 4pm. With four boats currently on the go (as described earlier in this issue) it appears to be not so much a hobby as an addiction for Jay.

It will be good to see how he manages things. See you there.

BOAT BUILDING; Although Brian Phillips' plans with the Wooden Boat Works may well overtake us, we would like to get expressions of interest from members for some sort of introductory wooden boat classes. Probably short term, high intensity stuff, like the Duck Flat classes in SA. We have no premises, courses, insurance or tutors at this stage, but depending on interest shown, no doubt something could be arranged. Ring the editor on 9397 6209 or Mike Williams on 9378 1633.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The AGM of ABBA will be held as announced earlier, at the Technical Meeting of Wednesday 26th of September at South of Perth Yacht Club. All positions are filled so this will be a brief formality although we would like to add a Vice President to the list. Any takers? Fees for the forthcoming year are also due now - \$20 with electronic newsletter, \$30 for hard copy. Cheques payable to ABBA, please.



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