

AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

NOV/DEC '04

ABBA COMMITTEE

Geoff Leggatt,	President,	ph 9437 5271 (Wk)	9316 8624 (Hm)
John McKillop.	Secretary,	ph 9494 9999 (Wk)	9313 7442 (Hm)
Alan Corey,	Treasurer,	ph 9328 8677 (Wk)	9204 3043 (Hm)
Mike Beilby,	Newsletter,	ph 9397 6209 (Hm)	

Contact any of these four people for clarification of association activities.

ABBA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 28 Sept, 2004

This was an easy but important event for us because, for the first time in about five years, we saw a change in the management committee, we revisited our incorporation status and we voted in a new constitution in recognition of that.

Three committee members, Geoff, John and myself, were prepared to stand again but treasurer, Chris, has been finding that business commitments need more time than he's got to give, and so after about six years in the hot seat, was standing down. As treasurer in all that time he's done a great job and we can't thank him enough for all his efforts in that direction. Additionally Chris did the lion's share of work in preparing for our incorporation over the past year or more. Only at the end, when making the appropriate applications, did he find that it was all for nought because we'd been incorporated all along. Even then it only came to light when we were knocked back on our original name application. It seems that some other group had registered the name we use about twenty five

years ago! (That was us, but all the officers, and most of the membership, had changed in that time) But anyway, all that hoo-hah was ably handled by Chris and finally put to bed with the adoption of a better constitution at the AGM, so once again we are in Chris's debt for all the work he put in - many thanks, Chris.

When it came to nominations for treasurer, I'm sorry to say, all old members kept their hands firmly in their pockets. Luckily, one new member to be, Alan Coy, could see the job for the simple bookkeeping job it is and volunteered, so we still have a committee. I might add that we very nearly missed out on Alan. He found us on the Web (we're on a page maintained by the Australian Wooden Boat Assn) but the information is not up to date - it shows us still meeting at MBSC! Fortunately Alan has a tenacious streak and when he found we don't meet there anymore he did some sleuthing and found us at RPYC. Thanks for coming along and putting your hand up, Alan, we need you.

All members received copies of the old and new constitutions by separate post just before the last newsletter but to sum up, the new one expands somewhat on some areas covered by the old constitution, and clarifies others. Fortunately it was voted in without a hitch.

When it came to the conventional business of the evening it wasn't so good. As you recall, we'd booked Steven Clemens, General Manager of Bainbridge (Aust) to talk on sailcloth and similar products but at the last minute he had a change of plans and was unable to make it so we were left without a guest speaker. This could have been disastrous but Geoff gave us a run down on developments at Austal, we all had coffee and discussed the availability of materials for wooden boats, plus ideas for the next meeting's show and tell topic.

Austal, as many of you know, is in the process of completing the world's largest aluminium vessel down at Henderson. It's a trimaran measuring 127m by 30m (that's most of a school oval, in my experience) destined for high speed ferry work in the Canary Islands. I haven't got all the statistics but I recall that the bottom plates are 32mm (about 1.25" in the old money) thick! A project for the near future is a 127m by

32m military trimaran - a Littoral Combat Ship. One will be built to trial against a more conventional, half-planing vessel by Lockheed-Martin in the US, seeking a US defence contract for about thirty vessels. Should we win the contract it will have to be filled at the Austal works in, I think, Mobile, Alabama, under the terms of the Jones Act (US). And although the luxury motor yacht business seems to be high and dry at the moment, it's more than made up for by orders for other military and coast guard organisations from near neighbours.

When it comes to timber supplies it seems that even Huon pine is still available if you know where. They haven't been allowed to cut new trees for some years but there's still a fair bit on the (Tasmanian) forest floor. Chris seems to think that it's available from one, Peter Marshal, and the sawmillers, Morrisons, at Strachan on the Tassy west coast, frequently cut it. Mike Wade has purchased Oregon from CedarWest in Walliston (sounds like a game of American Monopoly to me) while Harry Speight bought all the cedar strips for his big folding tri direct from Queensland, for a freight cost of only \$90.

So all in all, we had a great old chin-wag in lieu of a talk on sailcloth and everyone seemed to be happy with the result.

Tour of Maylands Boatyard

Geoff Leggatt

The tour of the Maylands Boatyard on Saturday 9th October was attended by a large number of ABBA members. We were greeted by Alun Duffy, the yard manager, who gave us a brief history of the yard which he believes is the only amateur boat building yard in Australia. The history of the site's use as a boat yard dates back to pre World War II, and the commencement date of some of the vessels still in the yard nearly does as well. The longest running project in the yard has been underway for 28 years and appears to still have a long way to go. Having visited this yard a number of

times as a child I would say that a number of other projects in the yard also looked familiar.

The yard currently has a 50 year lease on the site so it doesn't look like being shut down in the near future (good news for Mr 28 years). Another factor assisting in keeping the developers from the door is the historical significance of the site, having existed as a boat yard for such a long period of time. In addition it is located adjacent to Tranby House, another historical site.



Photo 1: Roberts Spray, 33 ft steel sailing monohull

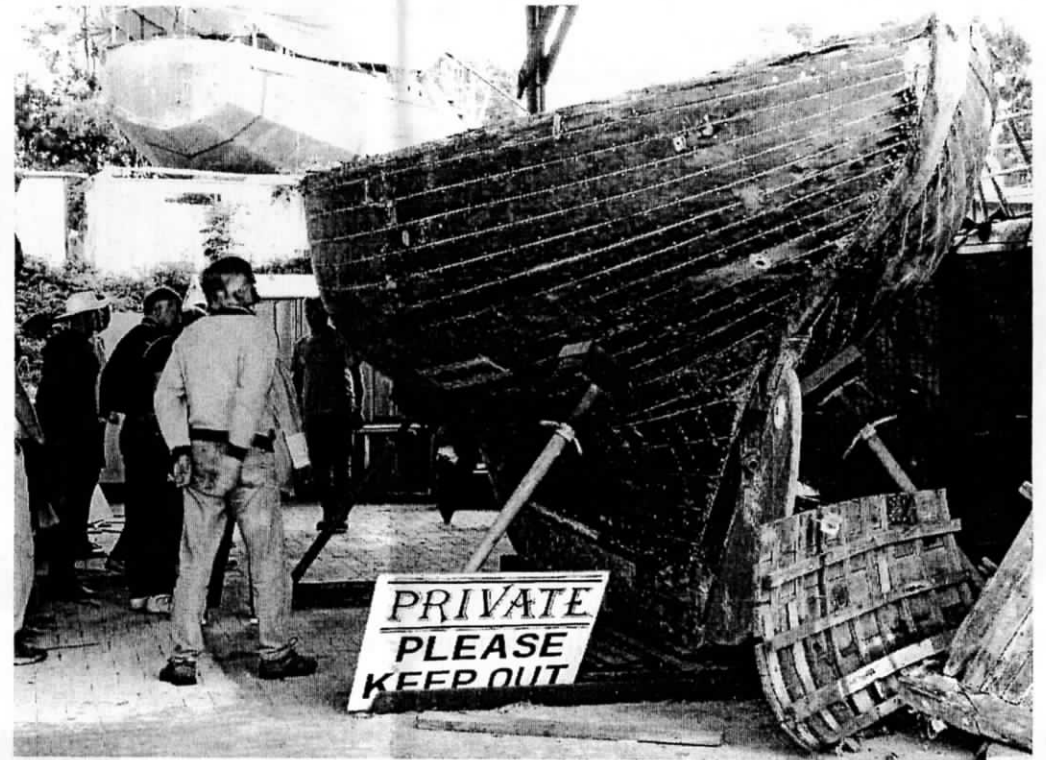


Photo 2: Harrison Buttler, canoe sterned oregon carvel planked yacht

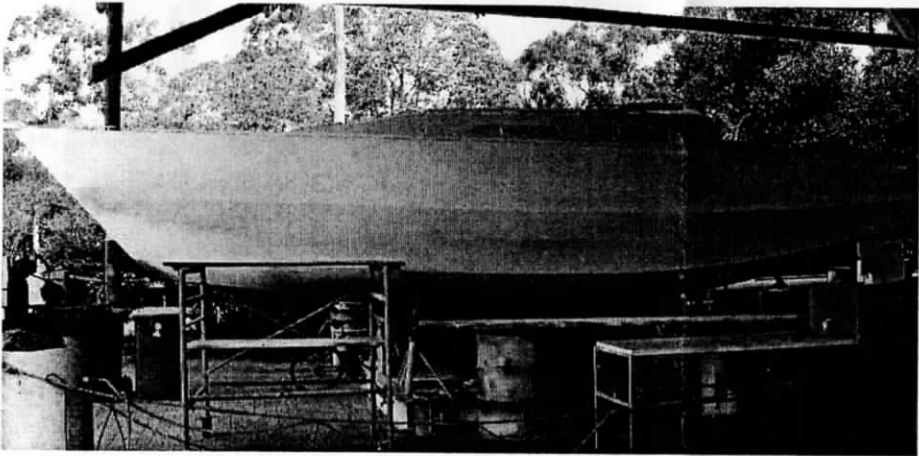


Photo 3: Van De Stadt 34, steel multi-chined sailing yacht

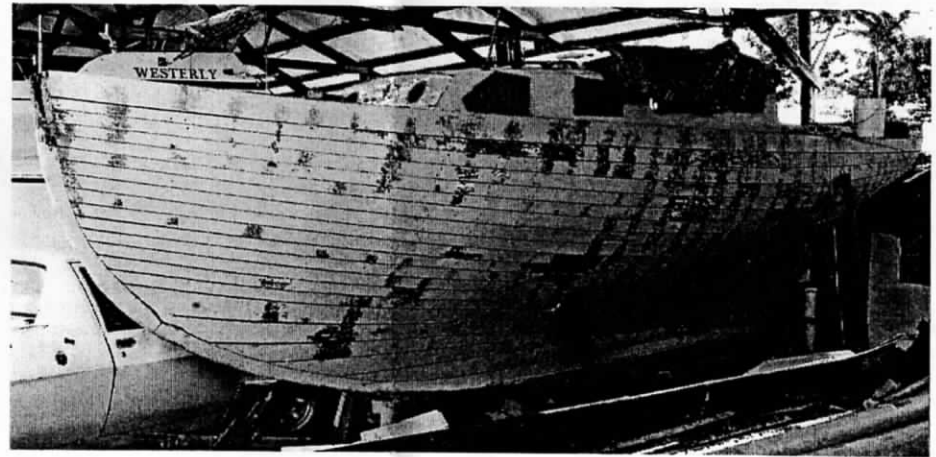


Photo 4: Planked sailing yacht

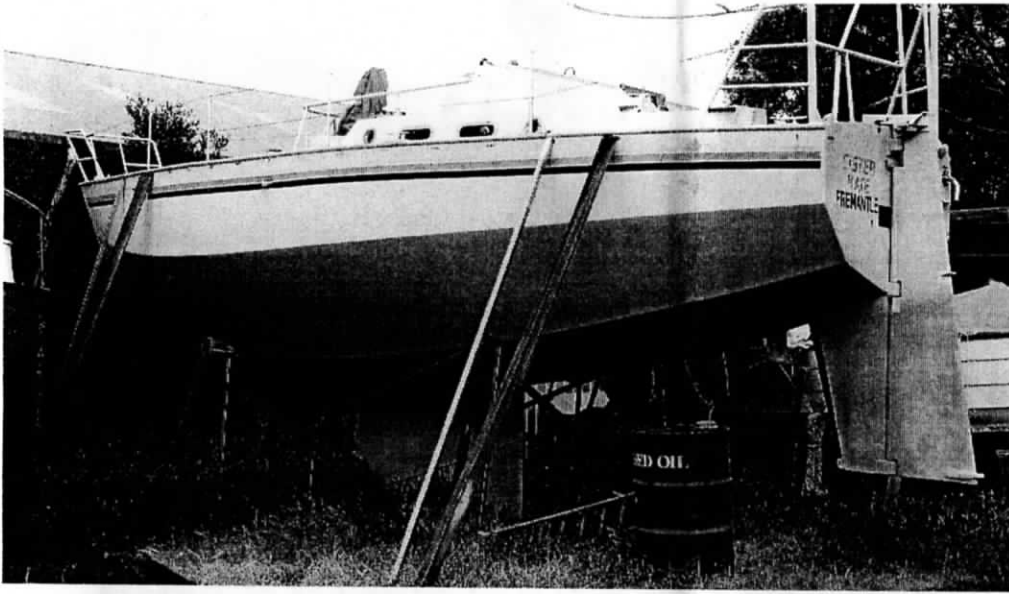


Photo 9: Multi-chined steel sailing yacht belonging to member John Spoor

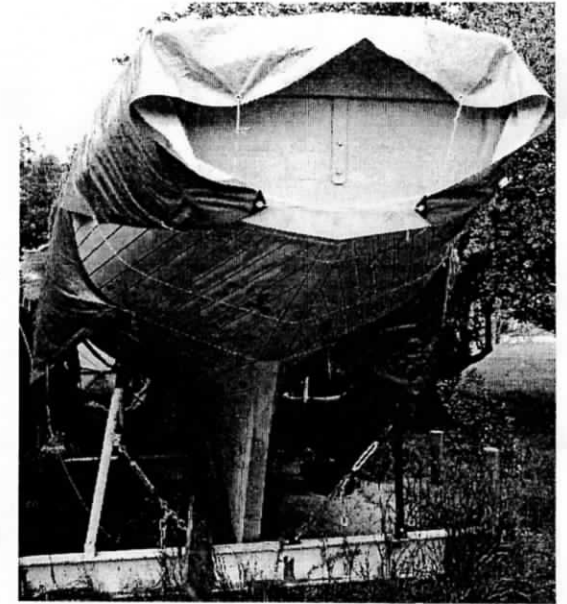


Photo 10: Cam Walker designed, carvel planked sailing vessel



Photo 11: Roberts Waverunner, aluminium motor launch

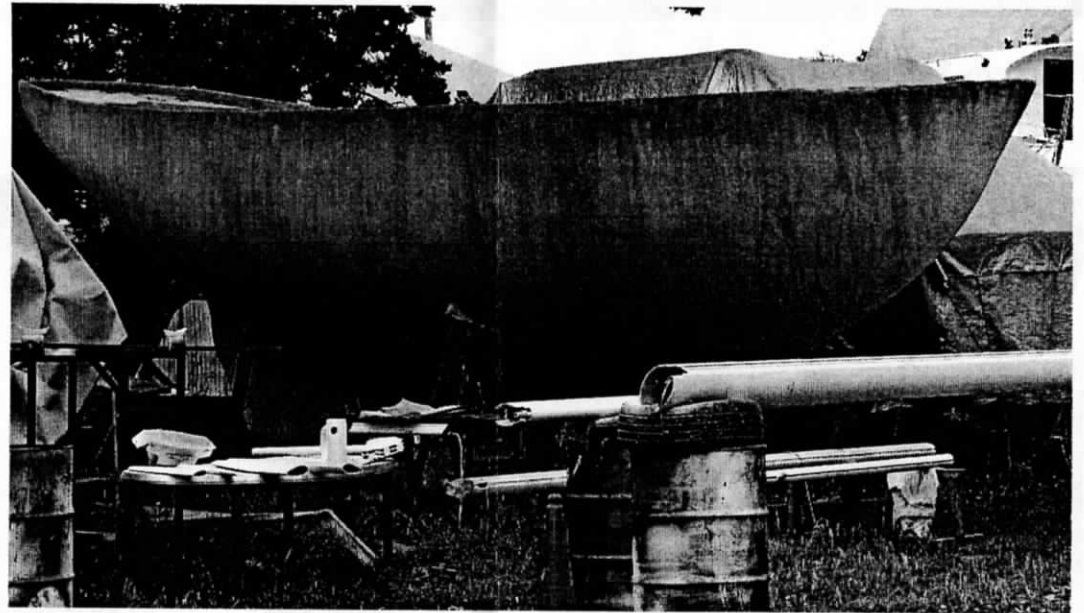


Photo 12: Sampson Seabird, 36 ft ferro cement sailing yacht



Photo 5: Sampson Seabird, 36 ft ferro cement sailing yacht

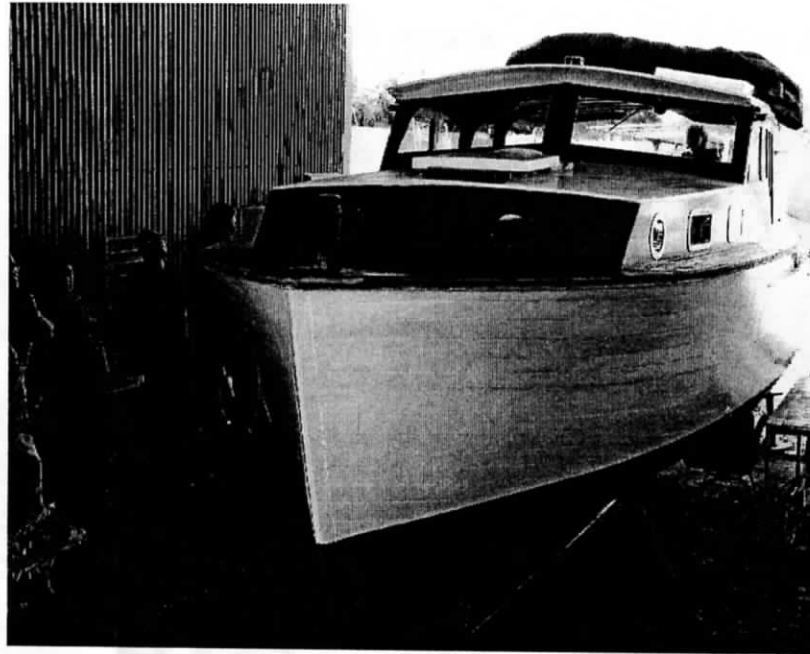


Photo 6: Halverson, carvel planked timber motor launch



Photo 7: Multi chine steel vessel with bilge keels

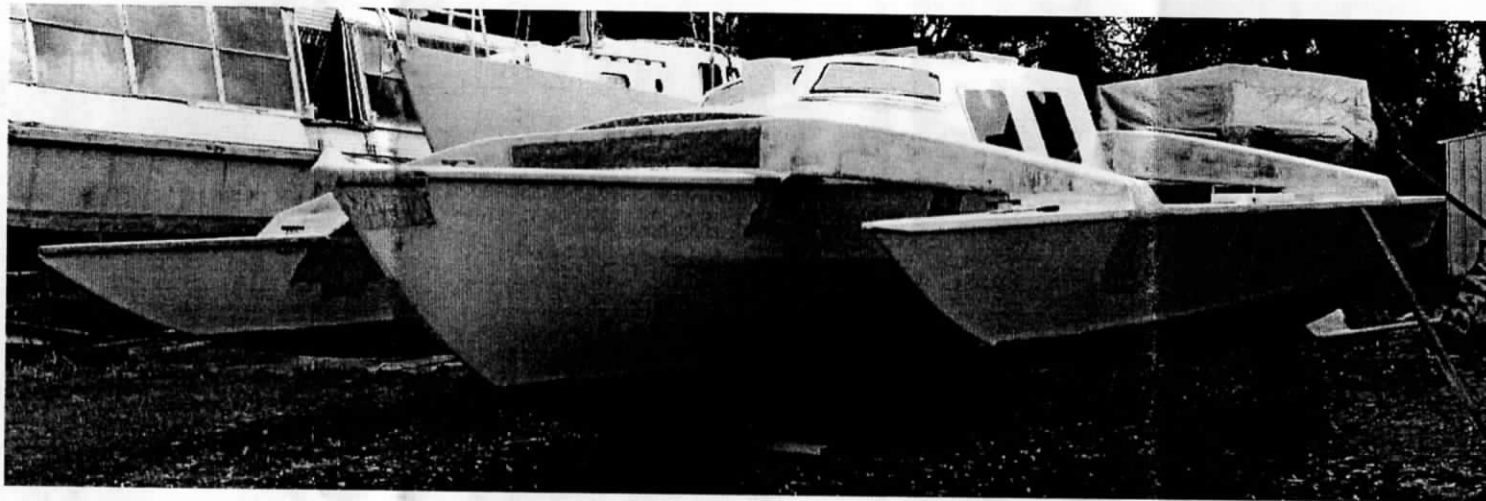


Photo 8: Trimaran, unknown design, unknown construction material (suspect plywood)

The yard currently houses approximately 100 vessels, with 25 in the water, 14 on undercover hardstand, and the remainder on open hardstand. Charges for housing a vessel at the yard are as follows:

\$154/ month open hardstand, \$231/ month undercover hardstand and \$181/ month jetty berth

To put some perspective on costs associated with a drawn out project, let's take the case of the vessel which has been on outside hardstand for 28 years. At today's rates this works out to be \$51,744 for housing of the project to date, so it would want to be a pretty special boat.

The construction materials varied greatly throughout the yard and included: steel, aluminium, ferro cement, plywood, planked timber, fiberglass, several unusual combinations of these, and fire wood. Similarly vessel type varied widely including: BBQ pontoon, sailing trimaran, sailing catamaran (at least the plug for one hull), bilge keeled sailing monohull, single keel sailing monohull, traditional motor launch, river ferry, and others which I am not quite sure how to describe.

Once Alun had finished describing the yard he handed us over to our tour guide for the day, Arno Dawson. I later found out that Arno is taking over from Alun as yard manager at the end of the year in order to allow Alun some time to finally work on his traditional motor launch "Margaret II" which is currently moored in one of the jetty pens. Arno set the mood for the tour with his initial survey of the members, enquiring about their current projects, current progress, and number of years duration. He stated that the Maylands yard only has a 5% to 10% success rate, with very few of the projects being completed by the original owners. For anyone attending the tour that wasn't 100% sure whether or not to commence a boat building project, Arno would have pretty quickly convinced you not to.

Some Arno Dawson rules of thumb were:

- budget approximately \$3000/ ft for your boat building project

- estimate the time it will take you to build the vessel, then double it.

- If you have a marriage, money, and inspiration when you start a project at Maylands slipyard you're bound to lose them.

The tour tended to be a lesson in what not to do and how to learn from other peoples' mistakes. There were however a few projects that appeared to have been very carefully put together and at a good rate of progress. Twelve of the projects viewed are pictured on the attached pages as follows:

Photo 1: Roberts Spray, 33 ft steel sailing monohull. This vessel is currently for sale (\$30,000), the last owner having spent a considerable amount of money on the interior fitout recently (\$70,000 total construction costs to date). This design is quite a popular cruising design, though not if you want to get anywhere in a hurry.

Photo 2: Harrison Butler, canoe sterned, oregon, carvel planked yacht

This vessel had some nice long oregon planks used in her construction. Arno was asked about the merits of restoring an old vessel versus building a similar vessel from scratch. Arno highlighted that the major advantage of restoring an old vessel, disregarding the historical significance of the vessel, is the fact that it would now be extremely difficult if not impossible to purchase timber of the same quality and length as that used in the original vessel.

Photo 3: Van De Stadt 34, steel multi-chined sailing yacht

This is a relatively modern design from a reputable yacht design company with good overall performance. This was one of two of this design under construction in the yard, both of which were of steel construction. The other vessel is on the open hard stand and Arno tells us it has been sitting rusting in this state since the owner, who was accustomed to steel

welding, has struggled with tackling the interior fitout. This design is unique in that it uses a frameless construction technique whereby the hull plates are laid into a building frame similar to a female mould and the plate seams are then welded to form the complete hull. This has the advantage of reducing the weld distortion in the hull plates which typically occurs when welding the shell plates to the transverse frames.

Photo 4: Planked sailing yacht

This vessel was thought by several of the members to have possibly been a vessel named Mary Hamilton.

Photo 5: Sampson Seabird, 36 ft ferro cement sailing yacht

Arno considers ferro cement a very good construction material, as did one of my university lecturers (although the rest of the class was inclined to disagree). The properties Arno views as favourable with this construction method are its low material costs (concrete, steel reinforcement, chicken mesh), ease of construction, durability in a marine environment, and strength. My main concerns with using this type of material are being able to produce a satisfactory repair in the event of damage, eliminating rusting of the steel reinforcements in the event of damage and as a result having the expanding rust blow apart the concrete, and attachment of components that have not been planned prior to construction. Arno explained to us that ferro cement vessels are extremely difficult to insure and that the few companies that will insure them charge excessive premiums. Many early builders had little sailing experience and many ferro cement vessels were damaged or sunk after striking reefs. As a result they are out of favour with the insurance companies and have a minimal resale value.

Photo 6: Halvorsen, carvel planked timber motor launch

This is one of a number of vessels in the yard

which Arno has spent considerable time assisting with. On this vessel he replaced the original degraded meranti superstructure with a new nyatoh superstructure at the request of the lady owner.

Photo 7: Multi chine steel vessel with bilge keels (unknown design) - This appeared to be the only vessel in the yard with bilge keels. This form of keel arrangement is often popular for use on cruising vessels, allowing the vessel to sit safely and upright on the hard in areas of extreme tidal range.

Photo 8: Trimaran, unknown design, unknown construction material (probably ply wood)

Photo 9: Multi-chined steel sailing yacht - This particular vessel is the project of ABBA member John Spore.

Photo 10: Cam Walker designed, carvel planked sailing vessel - This is a new vessel, currently for sale at between \$15000 and \$20000 according to Arno. The workmanship of the planking looked to be very good. A great project for someone with a lot of spare time.

Photo 11: Roberts Waverunner, aluminium motor launch - The original design for this vessel is 40 feet long however this version has been lengthened to 45ft. Good progress appeared to be being made on this project although the owner stated that he only works on it every Saturday.

Photo 12: Sampson Seabird, 36 ft ferro cement sailing yacht - This is the second of this design in the yard although this example is a hull only. Arno believes you could purchase this hull for around \$50 or the more attractive and more widely accepted Australian currency of one carton of beer (I still can't work out how one carton of beer costing approximately \$30 has a street value of approximately \$50, but this seems to be the case).

As can be seen from photos, the Maylands boat yard is certainly a good yard to visit to look at

various amateur boat building projects, both successful and not so successful. If you weren't able to attend the Toolbox excursion it is well worth the visit. You can view the large number

of other projects at various stages of completion and possibly pick up a bargain. Thanks very much to Alun Duffy and Arno Dawson for letting us have a poke around.

ADMINISTRATION NOTES

We're still trying to get into the Maritime Museum's storage shed in Blinco St, hopefully it will happen some time. For the mean time, what have we got?

Firstly, our regular evening meeting will not have a guest speaker, rather it will be a **SHOW AND TELL NIGHT** where you, the members, hold the stage, albeit for a short time only. Come along and tell us about your present project, large or small, over a period of 5 - 10 minutes, before making way for someone else. Members who've got something to talk about are asked to ring a committee member (phone numbers on the front of this newsletter) to advise us in advance, so that we can plan a bit.

The **SHOW AND TELL NIGHT** is at RPYC Junior Club, 7.30 for 8.00 pm, Tues 30th November.

The next **TOOLBOX VISIT** will be to Image Marine, courtesy of John McKillop, on Saturday, 18th Dec, at 2.00 pm sharp. We would have preferred the 11th, but that's the Austal/Image Xmas Party so we have to move it a bit closer to Xmas. Projects to see will be a 50m motor yacht which should be already launched and it's unclear whether we'll be able to board; a 37m motor yacht with workboat styling

rather than a luxury look, due for launch in February, and two 45m ferries for the Caribbean due for launch in May. That's at Image Marine, 18 Clarence Beach Rd, Henderson. Approach via Cockburn Rd and Quill Rd, park outside the gate, enter via the front boom gate and muster at the main front doors. There's a large Austal/Image sign on the east-facing front of the building. Please note; long trousers and closed in footwear are a site requirement.

Members who have E-mail are asked to supply their addresses and we'll consider E-mailing this news letter to those who'd prefer it, thereby saving money (we haven't got a lot).

CALENDAR

TUES, 30 Nov, Show and Tell evening, RPYC Junior Club, 7.30 for 8.00 pm.

SAT, 18th Dec, visit Image Marine, 18 Clarence Beach Rd, Henderson, 2pm to 4pm, sharp.

THURS, 16th Dec, Committee meeting at John McKillop's home.

FOR SALE: A double chine, stitch and glue pram dinghy, own design, in 6mm and 9mm mahogany ply. The boat includes oars, lugsail rig and 3.3hp Mercury outboard (10 hrs running) - brass and bronze fittings, etc. Dimensions: 3.1m by 1.3m. Built Canada, 1995.

Contact the owner, Chris da Roza on 9317 3104 (home) or 9410 1111 (work)